

The Canterbury
Poets



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AMERICAN SONNETS



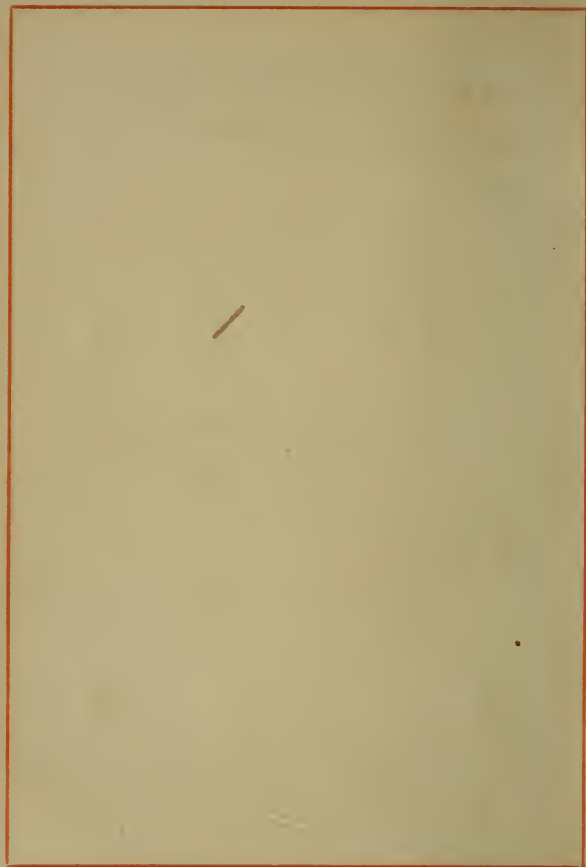
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The Canterbury Poets.

EDITED BY WILLIAM SHARP.

AMERICAN SONNETS.

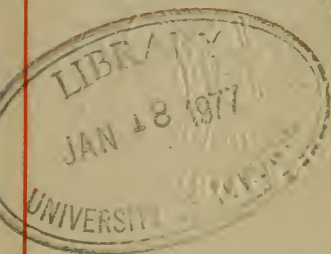


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A MERICAN SONNETS.
SELECTED AND
EDITED, WITH AN INTRO-
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SHARP.

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TO
EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN,
Author of "Victorian Poets," "Poets of America,"
"Poems," etc.,
AS
THE FOREMOST AMERICAN CRITIC,
THIS ANTHOLOGY
IS
INSCRIBED.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

IT is exactly a hundred years ago since the first sonnet by an American poet was written.

For a long time this species of verse languished, nor was it, indeed, till Longfellow wrought upon the imaginative sympathy of his native kindred, by his skilled and exquisite use of the favourite poetic form of several of the greater English poets, that it took permanent root, budded, and thenceforth perennially effloresced. Bryant, indeed, had written one or two sonnets before the greater singer had discovered the magic that lay in these arbitrarily - arranged fourteen - line poems, but the author of *Thanatopsis* was not only an unprolific poet, he had not that magnetic quality which in some degree is an electric force, the quality of stimulus, of excitation of other, perhaps dormant, poetic faculties. Longfellow himself was not a sonneteer by choice so much as by experiment, though so true an

artist that he showed his mastery from the first over a form certainly alien to his natural genius ; but partly owing to his example, and in part to other and generally extraneous influences, the sonnet has flourished in America mightily within the last two or three decades. It is now, probably, the favourite form with at least two-thirds of the younger poets and versifiers oversea.

To our benefit, as well as to our credit, it is no longer the vogue with literary critics to speak slightly of American poetry. The time has gone by when the diletante reviewer demanded, as Professor Richardson complains, that American poetry, if it was to exist at all, must be limited to pictures of the wharf, the prairie, and the gulch ; to city directories and geographical indices, to axe-swinging pioneers and impromptu assassins.

A close study, however, of the last fifty years of Transatlantic poetic literature certainly does not reveal a body of first-rate work comparable with that produced among ourselves, an assertion which may be set forth without implied disparagement of the great names so dear to thousands in this country, as well as to millions in America. But what more nearly concerns us is the work of very recent and contemporary poets. The test of a poetic period is not that of the absolute or relative greatness of its most eminent exemplars,

any more than the production of the largest and finest apple would be the test of the best orchard. How do the secondary poets of a period sing? What is the substance of their song? What are their limits? To what does their collective voicing tend? What degree of mental individuality and poetic originality do they possess and maintain? These are the questions which the student of literature has to consider before he can formulate any general opinion.

It is not to be gainsaid—as that acute and able critic, Mr. E. C. Stedman, admits—that there is “a lull in the force and efficacy of American song.” Longfellow has ceased his clear and beautiful singing, and Bryant’s stately measures seem to belong to an altogether bygone period. Poe, the most exaggeratedly praised, and the most exaggeratedly condemned, of all modern poets, long since threw away the lute of Israfel on which he played so “wildly well.” Emerson, potentially the greatest of American poets, rests beside a comrade to whom rhythmic metrical speech was still more emphatically denied, his friend Thoreau, who, like him, now slumbers deep in Sleepy Hollow. Bayard Taylor, so beloved, so full of high hope, and so pathetically foredoomed to a fame that must grow scantier with advancing years—he, too, is dead, and others of less repute

though of singular promise. Sidney Lanier, the musician whom some caprice of nature thwarted of his birthright, and left him the blind desire to play with words as he would fain have played with notes and chords, gave him the pen instead of the viol, is gone ; and Paul Hamilton Hayne, the impassioned but too impetuous, too regardlessly profuse singer of the south ; with others still whose lips were anointed, in whatsoever measure, with honey from Hymettus. Of the more eminent singers, still happily in what one of them calls,

“ This lonely sunlit ball that moves,
And gleams for a little while ’twixt dark and dark,”

one naturally recalls at once the veteran Whittier, whose sweet-brier song, however, is now seldom heard. Oliver Wendell Holmes, at once so quaint and so excellent, from whom the most exigent must no longer demand rivalries of past achievement ; James Russell Lowell, vigorous, clear-eyed, clear-voiced, and now in the calm which follows rather than that which precedes high productiveness ; Walt Whitman, stricken in years and health, but as serene as of yore, still alert to all the infinite possibilities of his own soul and of mankind in general, still oblivious of the irredeemable commonplace of so much of his barbaric chant ; and Richard Henry Stoddard, master of the ode, and

most spontaneously lyrical of all who lilt 'twixt "Athenian Boston" and "Sunset City."

But if we compare the general body of our minor (or, to use a term that seems less weighted with the possibility of covert disparagement, our secondary) poets of the last decade or two with that of the contemporary minor singers of America, I certainly do not think it any foregone conclusion that acknowledgment of our superiority would be our due. It is not flattering, it is not pleasant, to note what a quantity of our relatively popular verse has been the merest trifling of an idle hour—ballades and rondeaux and triolets, which generally bear the same relation to poetry that flirtation does to passion.

Too many of our secondary verse-writers seem to have been heedless of the fact that—in Mr. Stedman's words—in literature, as in architecture, construction must be decorated, not decoration constructed; that invention must precede both; and that if the imagination be clouded, and the flow of passion be unfelt, it is mere jugglery to compose at all.

What is it then that we find? Several of our verse-writers of repute employ their leisure moments in the fabrication of triolets about a lady's ribbon, of rondeaux about a mistress's fan, of ballades that bear a cruel resemblance to each other, of French

forms galore all about nothing in particular, and of poems which are only too manifestly not poems of growth, of impulsions, but of artistic manufacture. There is a general flatness of tone; a general aversion from strong or lofty emotion; a positive dislike of the infinitely suggestive life of the moment, a dalliance with themes which possess little save a purely literary (often a merely scholarly) interest. The great pulse of England does not throb less forcefully, the beat of the great heart is not less potent, because a number of middle-aged gentlemen and their more youthful comrades can find nothing worthy of song save in a world of artificiality, where men and women are puppets, and where the passions are petty trifles. But the spectacle is none the less significant, and if it have no serious import from any broad point of view, it would at least seem to indicate a relaxation of our poetic fibre to the prevalence (let us hope not the advent) of a wave of commonplace such as made the eighteenth-century Groves of Poetry mostly so very trim, superficial, and unattractive. Of course subject is not everything. It is only the philistine critic who would prefer an ill-sung heavenly strain to the magic of a flawless mundane song.

It is, therefore, significant that in contemporary American verse, technically inferior to our own as,

in the main, it undoubtedly is, the *motives* of the Transatlantic poets are far oftener more wide, more strenuous—in a word, worthier. No wave of national sentiment but perturbs the waters of verse; no heroic impulse, no calamity, no great national thrill, that does not immediately find an echo in song, and not here or there, but from Louisiana to Maine, and from Maine to the shores of Erie, from the Lakes to the Sierras, and from the remote mountains of the West to the Californian Gulf. It is almost incredible to those who have not closely studied, and who do not continuously watch the course of American literary affairs, how electric the nation is, how quick to respond to the first spark of emotion. It is no doubt the case that there is not yet a sufficiently strenuous literary tradition in the United States; there is not yet that inherited, that magnetically inspired, that contagious passion for exquisiteness of utterance as well as for worthiness of motive, which is what every potent people sooner or later strains towards and achieves. But this will come in time; it is already, indeed, beginning to work like strong yeast, and the literary development of America promises to be exceptionally rapid and potent. Even, however, on the ground of actual comparison, there are among the more recent American poets one or two whose artistic care is as great,

and whose touch is as light and dexterous, as that of any writer of verse among ourselves: T. B. Aldrich, for example, or, among still younger men, Richard Watson Gilder.

It would be easy of proof that the sonnet, more than any other poetic form, is that wherein the poets of our country have preferred to give utterance to their own and the general sentiment whenever some stirring incident or episode is rumoured abroad, or whenever any conflict of opinion disturbs the general mental atmosphere. To judge by analogy, therefore, it might be expected that the poetic voice of America would be heard at its best in the sonnet. This, however, I am not at all prepared to assert; nor do I think that the most exact scrutiny would reveal the Transatlantic sonnet to be the true index to the poetic receptivity of public sentiment, whether patriotic or intellectual. Why this should be so it is not easy to surmise, unless it be that the sonnet does not appear as naturally in a comparatively youthful as in a mature literature; though if this thesis be advanced, it has to be met by the awkward fact that the sonnet-literature of America was almost as prolific as our own up to the last few years, and that now (not altogether with joy and thanksgiving must it be admitted) it is even more redundant. I have recently waded through

considerably over two hundred volumes of American minor verse, by living or recently deceased authors, and have been amazed at the almost universal adoption of the sonnet, though of proof of the actual culture of this species of verse there is comparatively little. My sonnet search has convinced me, however, that a finer body of sonnets on general themes could be selected from the writings of the secondary poets of America than from those of our own minor bards.

In one important point there is no comparison. Whether from the circumstance that the rules of sonnet-structure are not commonly apprehended in their true significance, or that they are found to be too exigent for writers who have not yet learned the great lesson that poetic speech must be golden, whatsoever the subject matter be, certain it is that an extraordinary structural looseness prevails. Among our own writers it is now only the amateur who is unaware of the conditions which govern the mould of a sonnet, who is ignorant of the three great types in which the form may be created, the Petrarchan or Orthodox, the Shakespearian, and the Miltonic. It is now comparatively rare to find the names of poets of repute appended to a sonnet that is Petrarchan in all respects, save a rhymed couplet at the close, to a Shakespearian sonnet that breaks the quatrains

with related terminals, or to a Miltonic sonnet that has as many fundamental ideas as there are colours in a rainbow. But in America the sonnet goes forth in holiday. Oftenest it is content with casual divergencies, but too frequently it goes off on a rampage of its own, and sometimes it returns so disguised as hardly to be recognisable. The poet—one almost unread in this country, and very little known in America—who had the potentiality of becoming one of the greatest sonnet-writers on either side of the Atlantic, was among the worst offenders in this respect; for there are several remarkably noteworthy poems in this form by the late Charles Heavysege (a Canadian, however, it should be observed) which are neither more nor less than sets of seven rhymed-couplets. Undoubtedly the primary need of a sonnet is adequacy of motive, absolute adequacy in so far that the reader should feel that the matter could not have been said in less, and would be spoilt by further enlargement of space; in a word, that no other poetic form would be so apt. In this sense, accordingly, a poem which consists of seven rhymed-couplets may be much more truly a sonnet than one which is thoroughly orthodox in structure, but is merely an ordinarily descriptive poem, which might as well have been expressed in twelve or in fifteen lines. But the not least peculiar

charm of this species of verse is the pleasurable anticipation of prescribed harmonies. A glance betrays whether an example be after the Petrarchan or Shakespearian model in what may be termed its general contours, and to the sensitive reader there is a very unpleasant jar when some bastard form confuses the expected with the actual rhyme harmonies. To write, therefore, in a formless sonnet is to defraud the reader of a metrical music, the enjoyment of which had been with him a foregone conclusion. Yet no one could read such a poem as the following, by Heavysesge, without realising that, formless and even inartistic as it is, it is potentially a fine sonnet :—

ANNIHILATION.

Up from the deep Annihilation came
And shook the shore of nature with his frame ;
Vulcan, not Polyphemus of one eye,
For size or strength could with the monster vie ;
Who, landed, round his sullen eyeballs rolled,
While dripped the ooze from limbs of mighty mould.
But who the bard that shall in song express
(For he was clad) the more than Anarch's dress ?
All round about him hanging were decays
And ever dropping remnants of the past ;
But how shall I recite my great amaze
As down the abyss I saw him coolly cast
Slowly, but constantly, some lofty name
Men thought secure in bright, eternal fame.

In "The Dead," another potentially noble sonnet, there is manifest a kind of blind groping after propriety of form.

How great unto the living seem the dead !
How sacred, solemn ; how heroic grown ;
How vast and vague, as they obscurely tread
The shadowy confines of the dim unknown !
For they have met the monster that we dread,
Have learned the secret not to mortal shown.
E'en as gigantic shadows on the wall
The spirit of the daunted child amaze,
So on us thoughts of the departed fall,
And with phantasma fill our gloomy gaze,
Awe and deep wonder lend the living lines,
And hope and ecstasy the borrowed beams,
While fitful fancy the full form divines,
And all is what imagination dreams.

In his later examples Heavysege actually arrived at the correct Shakespearian form, though even in his powerful "Night"—the sonnet which contains the lovely quatrain,

" Oh, Night, art thou so grim, when, black and bare
Of moonbeams, and no cloudlets to adorn,
Like a nude Ethiop 'twixt two houris fair
Thou stand'st between the Evening and the Morn"—

he confuses the rhyming terminals of the second and third quatrains. It is curious, indeed, to

note how very small in quantity are the Shakespearian sonnets—the form that can be sweetest, most resonant, most impressive, when the favourite metrical medium of a true poet. There is, of course, one famous example, that of Edgar Allan Poe's "Science" (his "Zante" might also be quoted)—for the superb invocation to "Silence" is, structurally, as much a mongrel as any so-called sonnet by Heavysege. Bryant also wrote some Shakespearian forms, and among more recent exemplars may be mentioned Sidney Lanier and James Herbert Morse.

In a Note appended to the Introductory Essay prefacing the Thirtieth Thousand of my *Sonnets of this Century* I made the following remarks, which I may be excused for reiterating, as they have a particular relation to the present anthology of American Sonnets:—"When I began the task of reading and selection it was my intention to include no example which should contravene the structural laws of the Petrarchan, Shakespearian, or Miltonic forms. But though an anthology compiled on this principle would have indubitable interest and value, I arrived ere long at the conviction that the end I had in view would be best served by rendering the collection a thoroughly representative one, wherein would appear some of the finest sonnet-flowers from

the innumerable gardens in the Eden of contemporary poetry, irrespective of individual variations from perfect types. The result, as it appears to me, is my justification. One or two of my specialist-critics, naturally more alert to the exigencies of form than inclined to condone the exercise of a freedom which might prove misleading, regretted—notwithstanding potent claims of poetic worth—the inclusion of examples which perpetrate such enormities as a three-rhyme octave or a Petrarchan sestet ending with the Shakespearian rhymed-couplet. Yet, as my aim was not so much to gratify the specialist as to aid and enhance the popular appreciation of one of the most dignified and beautiful of our metrical forms, it is clear that a thoroughly comprehensive selection, comprising every reasonable variation, would, better than any other, enable the ordinary reader to judge for himself as to the merits of this or that type, and prevent the formation of judgments uncritical because of restricted familiarity with all varieties of the form.

“From the very extensive correspondence which has resulted from the publication of *Sonnets of this Century* I have obtained some valuable—or, at least, suggestive—hints. Judging therefrom, I find that very few readers, indeed, have so sensitive an ear as to be disturbed by, or to

be even conscious of, such an irregularity as the occurrence of a third rhyme (6th-7th lines) in the orthodox octave. Many, including some who are themselves excellent sonnet-writers, even prefer the variation—considering that a greater lightness, a more delicate grace, is the outcome of freedom from the conventional system. To this view the objection is, that one great charm of the sonnet lies in the expectancy wherewith the ear awaits the metrical evolution (after being prepared by a glance of the eye for either the Petrarchan, Shakespearian, or Miltonic form), and the consequent jar and disappointment when a new rhyme is unexpectedly introduced. However, a widely held opinion as to the immateriality of this structural licence certainly, at any rate, justifies the inclusion of occasional sonnets in an anthology such as this.

“Again, I find that the English, or Shakespearian, is preferred to any other sonnet-form for the direct expression of the passions ; and the orthodox, or Petrarchan, for that of the reflective, vicarious, and intellectual emotions. This seems to me a circumstance not only of interest to all that care for the subject, but of valuable import to those who are watching for, and speculating upon, the imminent development of our poetic literature.”

Further experience, gained partly from periodical

literature, and partly from correspondence with many writers here and in America, tends to convince me that the Shakespearian form is one exceptionally suited to English or American writers. Their movement is generally freer, their diction more natural, their style more lucid and emphatic in this species of verse than in any other. Nevertheless, the orthodox Petrarchan form will probably remain the favourite with sonneteers to whom the metrical advantages of the sonnet are of primary and special appeal; for it is indubitably the more artistic, and it more readily lends itself to rhythmic variety.

On one other matter I have also come to modify my opinion. A more exhaustive study of the older, and more particularly of the mediæval sonnet-literature of Italy, has convinced me that there is no real distinction between the orthodox and the so-called Contemporary Sonnet, and that the adjustment of the latter to a Natural Law (with large capitals) is a somewhat extravagant and fantastic procedure. Three years ago the *Spectator*, in a review of the first edition of *Sonnets of this Century*, complained that the only point on which the editor of that book "had gone altogether wrong" was "his adoption of the fantastic theory, fathered by Mr. Theodore Watts, that the two parts of a sonnet

bear, or ought to bear, a recognisable resemblance to the ebb and flow of a wave. As a mere fancy, a more or less pretty conceit, this notion is quite harmless ; but whims of this kind, hardened into dogmas and definitions, are the bane of sensible criticism." Now that I have to repudiate this theory as one of no real value, as one of, at best, pseudo-scientific significance, I must admit having at one time not only adopted it, but having pressed it to a still more fantastic conclusion, and drawn an arbitrary distinction between "the law of flow and ebb" and that of "ebb and flow," which after all puts one in mind of the attempt at definition of the difference between two perfect circles, by the explanation that one curves from right to left and that the other curves from left to right. True, I did add, "it is thus evident that the Contemporary type is no variation from the Petrarchan, but is simply an artistically understood development thereof." But none the less the preceding remarks were apt to mislead. Mr. Watts has frequently written upon the sonnet, and his opinion bears weight, but probably not the collective opinion of all the sonnet-specialists could enforce the general acceptance of a theory which is really nothing more than a pleasant conceit. It is indubitable that the prevalent tendency to reduce the free impulses of poetry to conformity with

certain fanciful formulas is a harmful one, and from this point of view all exaggerated definitions are to be deprecated.

But the commonest complaint of all I found to be the supposed artificiality of the sonnet as a metrical form. One reviewer—one of the most accomplished of specialists upon English verse—wrote so much to the point in this connection that I cannot do better than quote his (Mr. J. Addington Symond's) words:—"There is no undue artificiality in a sonnet as a vehicle of expression. Adequate thought or emotion, once carefully enshrined in a metrical form so complex, acquires independent being. Writing a sonnet is thus the same as giving organic body to a fragmentary soul, which would else be imperceptible to sense and without duration in this world. But the very artificiality of the vehicle, the fixity of the stanza, renders it a source of strength to those who are not in a high sense creative. Forced to mould unshaped matter of the mind into individual star form, the men of whom I speak would fail. But when they have mastered the conditions of the sonnet, they can pour into that deftly-fashioned vase a liquid thought or feeling which shall afford refreshment to many generations. Such singers do not demand the elbow-room of infinity. Most of the greatest require it ; therefore, the sonnet's

narrow plot is an advantage for the former, an irksome limitation for the latter. It is a principal merit of such anthologies as Mr. Sharp's that they secure an audience for poets of a genuine but minor quality throughout the far future. After some such fashion as this, I imagine, the Greek Anthology was gradually put together; and who would not be glad after two thousand years to survive in a single epigram or sonnet? Soul thrills soul by tiny sparkles of semi-lyric fire, if less intensely, not less truly, than by Sophoclean dramas or Pindaric odes."

I have before me a large collection of American sonnets, of which the two hundred and fifty that I have selected for this anthology constitute but a portion, and from this and other sources I infer that fully half of contemporary sonnets of worth oversea are in the Petrarchan or Orthodox mould of a two-rhymed octave and two tercets (or three interwoven couplets), while it is almost certain that at least eight-tenths of the best sonnets are so constructed.

Foremost among American sonneteers stands Longfellow, the only member of the supreme group who uses this form with ease and dignity. Some score of examples—including the beautiful *Divina Commedia* series—might be selected from his works and compared with twenty by any

modern English poet, save Wordsworth, nor lose thereby for nobility of sentiment and graciousness of diction. Wordsworth himself might have been proud to include "Nature," for instance, among his finest sonnets. As to the very difficult and delicate decision concerning those who should next be mentioned, a foreign critic is not so disadvantageously placed as if he were the butterfly in the hornet's nest. Still, it is no easy matter even to give expression to a definite personal opinion. Let me first mention some names alphabetically, so that the genius of nomenclature and not the present chronicler may be held responsible. Foremost, then, one thinks of Aldrich, that dainty lyricist, who has written some notable sonnets, among them one which is of special appeal to us who are but foreigners in name :—

TO ENGLAND.

While men pay reverence to mighty things
They must revere thee, thou blue-cinctured isle
Of England—not to-day, but this long while
In front of nations, Mother of Great Kings,
Soldiers, and poets. Round thee the sea flings
His steel-bright arm, and shields thee from the guile
And hurt of France. Secure, with august smile,
Thou sittest, and the East its tribute brings.
Some say thy old-time power is on the wane,
Thy moon of grandeur filled, contracts at length—
They see it darkening down from less to less :
Let but a hostile hand make threat again,
And they shall see thee in thy ancient strength,
Each iron sinew quivering, lioness !

"Egypt," "Miracles," "Fredericksburg," "Pursuit and Possession," and "Enamoured Architect of Airy Rhyme," are among the finest of Mr. Aldrich's sonnets, and will be found in the body of this book. Bryant has already been alluded to ; and thereafter come, head and shoulders above a crowd of sweet but minor singers, Edgar Fawcett, R. W. Gilder, and Helen Hunt Jackson—for O. W. Holmes, though he has written one or two sonnets, is no sonneteer. Edgar Fawcett seems to me to have written the most weighty sonnets after Longfellow's ; but when I come to select one I am perturbed by memory of half-a-dozen special favourites. For breadth of vision, "Other Worlds" is very noteworthy :—

I sometimes muse, when my adventurous gaze
Has roamed the starry arches of the night,
That were I dowered with strong angelic sight
All would look changed in those pale heavenly ways.
What wheeling worlds my vision would amaze !
What chasms of gloom would thrill me and affright !
What rhythmic equipoise would rouse delight !
What moons would beam on me, what suns would blaze !
Then through my awed soul sweeps the larger thought
Of how creation's edict may have set
Vast human multitudes on those far spheres
With towering passions to which mine mean naught,
With majesties of happiness, or yet
With agonies of unconjectured tears.

A large and noble utterance characterises all the really fine work of Mr. Fawcett, and I may draw particular attention to his sombre "Suicide," "Earthquake," "Sleep's Threshold," and "Commonplaces," inspired by "the dark, ubiquitous, commonplace of Death." Mr. R. W. Gilder's sonnets also are generally masterly, and he has succeeded, moreover, in writing a good new "Sonnet on the Sonnet"—a curiously ineffective task, which at least a score of writers, from Wordsworth and Rossetti downwards, have set themselves to accomplish. None will ever equal Wordsworth's familiar prototype; all others are mere playing with the wind, excellent though they may be;—yet among them I am inclined to consider that which is given as No. 59 in this anthology as the most satisfactory. Among the best of Mr. Gilder's sonnets are one or two already familiar to students of contemporary poetry, "Day Unto Day Uttereth Speech" and "My Love for Thee doth march like Arméd Men" in particular, while in "The Life-Mask of Abraham Lincoln" he has touched a very high note indeed. I quote it here, as it was inadvertently omitted from the body of the book :—

This bronze doth keep the very form and mould
Of our great martyr's face. Yes, this is he :
That brow all wisdom, all benignity ;
That human, humorous mouth ; those cheeks that hold
Like some harsh landscape all the summer's gold ;
That spirit fit for sorrow, as the sea
For storms to beat on ; the lone agony
Those silent, patient lips too well foretold.
Yes, this is he who ruled a world of men
As might some prophet of the elder day—
Brooding above the tempest and the fray
With deep-eyed thought and more than mortal ken.
A power was his beyond the touch of art
Or armed strength : his pure and mighty heart.

"H. H." were long while familiar and welcome initials with the Transatlantic reading public, and both as a woman and a writer Mrs. Helen Hunt Jackson exercised a widespread and beneficent influence. Her "Freedom" is an especially noble sonnet, though its rhythmic strength unfortunately flags somewhat in the last line. The greatest charm of her work, both in prose and verse, is her keen sense of colour. For flowers she had what could not be called other than a passion, and her friends have delighted in recalling her eagerness and joy over every bloom and blossom in the neighbourhood of her home, near Cheyenne Mountain, in Colorado. In personality she was the most poetic of poets, and in her love of

physical beauty more "Greek than the Greeks." It is probable that no woman of her time exercised such a sway over the admiration and sympathies of the younger American writers. Her *Ramona* is a prose idyl which deserves a place among the memorable works of imaginative fiction. Much of Mrs. Jackson's poetry, however, is void of its subtlest charm to those who never met her ; it has the common fault of Transatlantic verse, a too nervous facility, a diffuseness which palls rather than attracts. When, a few years hence, some sympathetic but sternly critical hand shall give us a selection of all that is best in the writings of "H. H.," her name will rest on a surer basis.

Readers who would like to know more about her should peruse Mr. Louis Swinburne's *Reminiscences* of the poet in the *New Princeton Review* for July 1886. Among tributes of the kind which she would have most valued, I have encountered none to surpass that of Mr. Gilder, which I quote :—

"H. H."

I would that in the verse she loved, some word,
Not all unfit, I to her praise might frame :
Some word wherein the memory of her name
Should through long years its incense still afford.
But no, her spirit smote with its own sword ;
Herself has lit the fire whose blood-red flame
Shall not be quenched : this is her living fame

Who struck so well the sonnet's subtle chord.
None who e'er knew her can believe her dead ;
 Though should she die they deem it well might be
Her spirit took its everlasting flight
 In summer's glory, by the sunset sea,—
That onward through the Golden Gate it fled.
 Ah, where that bright soul is cannot be night.

James Kenyon, Professor Henry Beers, Owen Innsley, and the late Emma Lazarus, are all noteworthy sonneteers, and the latter has the distinction of being the foremost latter-day poet of Israel. Her poetry has a singular loftiness and, if the seeming paradox be permitted, a passionate serenity, which distinguish it from the great bulk of contemporary minor verse. It is by such lyrics as "The Banner of the Jew" that she will no doubt be longest remembered, but her poetic dramas, particularly "The Dance to Death," are remarkable in the best sense. Perhaps to the majority of readers she appeals most by her renderings from the mediæval Hebrew poets of Spain, Gabirol, Jehudah ben Halevi, Moses ben Esra ; by those from Petrarch and Dante, and from Heine and A. de Musset. For translation she had a faculty scarce short of genius. Miss Lazarus is not always at her ease in the sonnet, but her "Success," "Venus of the Louvre," and "Love's Protagonist," are fine examples of this form.

Mr. Kenyon's second volume, *In Realms of Gold*, attracted much favourable attention when it was published two years ago, and as a sonneteer he is certainly without more than two or three serious rivals. His Shakespeare Sonnets, "Romeo to Juliet," and "Cleopatra to Antony," have been much admired, though I think his two strongest are the sombre "Rizpah" and "The Traveller."

There are one or two Canadian poets whose verse has mainly appeared in United States magazines, and who, apart from any accident of birth or place, are distinctively American. Foremost among these northern singers are Charles G. D. Roberts and Archibald Lampman. The former is admittedly at the head of younger Canadian poets, and his *In Divers Tones* and other volumes have gained attention here as well as oversea. Among his best sonnets are two which have been widely circulated in this country, "The Potato Harvest" and "The Sower," studies in impressionistic realism which show that the sonnet can have the simple directness of the ordinary quatrain or of rhymed heroics. Mr. Lampman would seem to be to Canada what Maurice Thompson and Miss Edith Thomas are to the States, the foremost younger poet-chronicler of nature. His *Among the Millet* is a pleasant

volume ; but that he can convey the human as well as the merely naturalistic sentiment is evident in the following sonnet, which is all the more noteworthy as it deals with a theme that poets have generally avoided, as though the shriek of the steam engine were the direst sound the Muse could hear :—

THE RAILWAY STATION.

The darkness brings no quiet here, the light
No waking : ever on my blinded brain
The flare of lights, the rush, and cry, and strain,
The engine's scream, the hiss and thunder, smite ;
I see the hurrying crowds, the clasp, the flight,
Faces that touch, eyes that are dim with pain :
I see the hoarse wheels turn, and the great train
Move labouring out into the boundless night.

So many souls within its dim recesses,
So many bright, so many mournful eyes :
Mine eyes that watch grow fixed with dreams and
guesses ;
What threads of life, what hidden histories,
What sweet or passionate dreams and dark distresses,
What unknown thoughts, what various agonies !

When I spoke of "H. H." and Miss Emma Lazarus, I should also have alluded to another sonneteer of the same sex, than whom few occupy a more established position ; indeed, as far as

recognition in this country goes, few American writers are more fortunate than Mrs. Louise Chandler Moulton. Mrs. Moulton is very nearly alone in her solicitous culture of the sonnet out of sheer love and preference for it among all metrical forms. The selections I have made from her numerous poems of this kind are fairly representative.

The number of women poets of worth in America is significant of the wide-spread literary culture and literary instinct which more than one eminent observer has recently noted. Besides those already alluded to, who are at the same time sonnet writers, mention should be made of Helen Gray Cone, Mrs. Julia C. Dorr, Anne Lynch, Mrs. L. C. Perry, Mrs. Margaret Preston, Miss S. M. Spalding, Celia Thaxter, Ella Wheeler-Wilcox, and Mrs. Piatt—though the last-named, in common with Miss Alice and Miss Phœbe Cary, and other popular writers of verse, have not distinguished themselves as sonneteers.

It is no disparagement to so fine a poet as Mr. Lowell to remark that he has not published any exceptionally fine sonnet, though several that are much above the average level. The form does not suit him; and even at his best therein he rides his Pegasus somewhat cumbrously. The late John Godfrey Saxe claimed to have written

one of the finest sonnets in the language. I have carefully read all his few poems in this form, and conclude that that particular sonnet has in some extraordinary fashion been omitted from the copy of the *Poetical Works* in my possession. Among other "S's," mention should be made of Edmund Clarence Stedman, *facile princeps* among American literary critics; of the versatile Clinton Scollard; of W. W. Story, better known, perhaps, as a sculptor than as a poet; and of Frank Dempster Sherman. Bayard Taylor's genius was much too impulsively lyrical to afford him mastery in the sonnet, and Whittier's is too spontaneous and unconscious. Among others of some standing I may mention finally Stephen H. Thayer; that strange, religious enthusiast, Jones Very (which once in my ignorance I took to be a humorous pseudonym—as I find others have done), Professor Henry Beers, and Edith M. Thomas, to whom, however, allusion has already been made.

The American poet of recent date, at once most over-praised and under-rated, is the late Sidney Lanier. "Lanier is the nightingale of Baltimore," remarked an enthusiastic critic some time ago. "Possibly," was the unfeeling retort; "but in that case Baltimore must be hard-up for dicky-birds." Lanier was indubitably a lyrical poet of quite exceptional faculty, though affectation and strained

effect spoilt much of his verse ; but here we have to do with him simply as a sonneteer. Why he wrote sonnets at all is a mystery, for he had no inevitable bias that way ; on the contrary, his mannerisms become much more obvious and distracting. Yet his sonnets have many admirers, and undoubtedly even when most obviously "manipulated" have still a certain quality of saving grace. For this reason I have represented him by several examples, though personally I admit that their lack of rhythmic strength is a vital drawback to enjoyment. "The Harlequin of Dreams," the series entitled "In Absence," and the two comprised in "Acknowledgment," are his best ; in the latter there is an exuberance, an exaggeration of address which is strongly suggestive of the diction of the lesser Elizabethans. "Laus Mariae" is accepted by many as his best sonnet. Yet, interesting as it is in some respects, one cannot but wonder at the critical blindness of those who call Lanier the American Keats.

There is one ominously suggestive circumstance for which I should like some skilled reader of riddles to account. What is the reason that *every* American poet who writes sonnets has addressed one to, or composed one upon, Sleep ? I shudder to think of the "sleeps"—good, bad, and indifferent

—which I have vicariously enjoyed. Why this persistent hymning of Slumber? Is it after much sonnet-writing, or reading? Is it in prophetic vision of the effect upon stolid Britons of a course of American poetry? I would fain know; but meanwhile I am willing to adventure upon the most extravagant wager that the American sonneteer who has not apostrophised or celebrated Sleep is yet unborn.

The Quatrain, as a distinct species of verse, has never had much vogue among us. True, we have several exquisite examples, and not even in the Greek Anthology, for instance, is there anything to surpass Landor's

I strove with none, for none was worth my strife.
Nature I loved, and next to nature, art.
I warmed both hands before the fire of life:
It sinks ; and I am ready to depart.

There are few finer quatrains, again, in English than the following, by Sydney Dobell, perhaps the last poet of any standing from whom one would expect anything so excellent in concise simplicity—

Nature, a jealous mistress, laid him low.

He woo'd and won her ; and, by love made bold,
She showed him more than mortal man should know,
Then slew him, lest her secret should be told.

But it would be difficult, perhaps, to compile even a score of really good representative quatrains by contemporary English poets. Mr. William Watson occupies an almost unique place with his volume of Quatrains [*Epigrams*], several of which, I may add in passing, are excellent, though in this connection I should not omit mention of Mr. Richard Garnett, many of whose original four-line compositions equal in finish and delicacy those which several years ago he so admirably translated from the Greek Anthology.

The following, by the late James Thomson ("B. V."), also deserves to be put on record, charged as it is with the pessimism of the quatrains of Omar Khayyám :—

ON A BROKEN PIPE.

Neglected now it lies a cold clay form,
So late with living inspirations warm :
Type of all other creatures wrought of clay—
What more than it for Epitaph have they ?

It is in America where the short story is appreciated as it ought to be, and where it has been assiduously and artistically cultivated to a point

of literary excellence much beyond the general standard here—that this, the most succinct of metrical forms, save the epigrammatic couplet, is to be found flourishing. As for that delightful form, the Double-Quatrain, many American poets seem to take to it as naturally as a thrush to its repetitive April song. How complete and how perfect in its own way, for instance, is the following, by Louise Imogen Guiney:—

SPRING.

Again the bloom, the northward flight,
The fount freed at its silver height,
And down the steep woods to the lowest,
The fragrant shadows scarred with light.

O inescapable joy of Spring !
For thee the world shall leap and sing ;
But by her darkened door thou goest
For ever as a spectral thing.

Mrs. Piatt is an adept also, and three of her finest double-quatrains are included in my brief selection. But as Transatlantic singers have not the same monopoly of the double as of the single quatrain, I have been content to quote only a few representative examples—as, indeed, I have perforce had to do in the case of the quatrain itself. In his pleasant volume of *Madrigals and Catches*,

Mr. Frank Dempster Sherman has not unsuccessfully done for this species of verse what Wordsworth and others have done for the sonnet.

THE QUATRAIN.

Hark at the lips of this pink whorl of shell,
And you shall hear the ocean's surge and roar ;
So in the Quatrain's measure, written well,
A thousand lines shall all be sung in four.

I may add, finally, that, as in the case of *Sonnets of this Century*, I have adopted an alphabetical in preference to any other arrangement—a plan which seems to me to have everything in its favour where there are many selections from the writings of living authors. Another great advantage is also thus gained—namely, that the sonnets by which a poet may be represented can be read concurrently. Any other plan seems to me a mistake where contemporary writers are concerned ; except, perhaps, where no poet is represented by other than a single example.

I hope this little volume may stimulate a curiosity in, and an appreciation of, those American poets who so emphatically betray their lineage with the great singers who are

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dear to us all, and have given and still afford such ample proof that they rejoice in, and value, and strive to perpetuate the splendid inheritance bequeathed by those who have long since or but recently thrown down their crowns, and fared Parnassus-ward.

WILLIAM SHARP.

[A special note of acknowledgment is due to Messrs. HARPER & BROS. for the right to reprint Mr. H. M. ALDEN's sonnet, as well as one or two others which have appeared exclusively in *Harper's Magazine*.]

AMERICAN SONNETS.

INDIFFERENCE.

WHAT is indifference, do you ask of me?

O well I know the meaning of the phrase.

It is to find grey ash instead of blaze
That warmed you once ; to lose, alas ! the key
Which turned in friendship's wards ; to sometime see
The eyes that shone for you in other days
Now coldly meet your own in passing gaze ;
To know that what has been no more shall be.

It is to find that you in naught believe,

To know that youth has fled far down the past,

To feel that hope will ne'er again be born,

And love is but a poor worn cheat at last.

It is all this, *yet not for this to grieve,—*

To live and heed not that one lives forlorn !

A CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM.

THOU Child-Soul, sister of the Loving Ones
Whom Dante saw circling in choral dance
Above the stars ; thou who in charmèd trance
Dost bind these earthly to those heavenly zones,
So that Love's spell all lower life attones
To that far song ; behold my ministrants—
All things that live—in loving train advance,
Thee following. Even as the Sea, that moans
With wildness, followeth the moon's white dream
His rage suppressed—so, by thy heavenly mood
The fiercer beasts that in the jungle brood
Assuagèd are ; and thou, sweet maid, shalt even
Thy triumph join unto the pomp supreme—
God's Kingdom come on Earth as 'tis in Heaven.

ENGLAND.

WHILE men pay reverence to mighty things,
They must revere thee, thou blue-cinctured isle
Of England—not to-day, but this long while
In front of nations, Mother of great kings,
Soldiers, and poets. Round thee the sea flings
His steel-bright arm, and shields thee from the guile
And hurt of France. Secure, with august smile,
Thou sittest, and the East its tribute brings.
Some say thy old-time power is on the wane,
Thy moon of grandeur, filled, contracts at length—
They see it darkening down from less to less.
Let but a hostile hand make threat again,
And they shall see thee in thy ancient strength,
Each iron sinew quivering, lioness !

EGYPT.

FANTASTIC Sleep is busy with my eyes :

I seem in some waste solitude to stand

Once ruled of Cheops : upon either hand

A dark illimitable desert lies,

Sultry and still—a realm of mysteries ;

A wide-browed Sphinx, half-buried in the sand,

With orbless sockets stares across the land,

The woefulest thing beneath these brooding skies,

Where all is woeful, weird-lit vacancy.

'Tis neither midnight, twilight, nor moonrise.

Lo ! while I gaze, beyond the vast sand sea

The nebulous clouds are downward slowly drawn,

And one bleared star, faint-glimmering like a bee,

Is shut in the rosy outstretched hand of Dawn.

ENAMOURED ARCHITECT OF AIRY RHYME.

ENAMOURED architect of airy rhyme,
Build as thou wilt ; heed not what each man says.
Good souls, but innocent of dreamers' ways,
Will come, and marvel why thou wastest time ;
Others, beholding how thy turrets climb
'Twixt theirs and heaven, will hate thee all their
days ;
But most beware of those who come to praise.
O Wondersmith, O worker in sublime
And heaven-sent dreams, let art be all in all ;
Build as thou wilt, unspoiled by praise or blame,
Build as thou wilt, and as thy light is given ;
Then, if at last the airy structure fall,
Dissolve, and vanish—take thyself no shame.
They fail, and they alone, who have not striven.

MIRACLES.

SICK of myself and all that keeps the light
Of the blue skies away from me and mine,
I climb this ledge, and by this wind-swept pine
Lingering, watch the coming of the night.

'Tis ever a new wonder to my sight.

Men look to God for some mysterious sign,
For other stars than those that nightly shine,
For some unnatural symbol of His might :—
Would'st see a miracle as grand as those

The prophets wrought of old in Palestine ?
Come watch with me the shaft of fire that glows
In yonder West ; the fair, frail palaces,
The fading alps and archipelagoes,
And great cloud-continent of sunset-seas.

FREDERICKSBURG.

THE increasing moonlight drifts across my bed,
And on the churchyard by the road, I know,
It falls as white and noiselessly as snow.
'Twas such a night two weary summers fled ;
The stars, as now, were waning overhead.
Listen ! Again the shrill-lipped bugles blow
Where the swift currents of the river flow
Past Fredericksburg,—far off the heavens are red
With sudden conflagration : on yon height,
Linstock in hand, the gunners hold their breath :
A signal-rocket pierces the dense night,
Flings its spent stars upon the town beneath :
Hark !—the artillery massing on the right ;
Hark !—the black squadrons wheeling down to
Death !

“EVEN THIS WILL PASS AWAY.”

TOUCHED with the delicate green of early May,
Or later, when the rose unveils her face,
The world hangs glittering in star-strown space,
Fresh as a jewel found but yesterday.
And yet 'tis very old ; what tongue may say
How old it is ? Race follows upon race,
Forgetting and forgotten ; in their place
Sink tower and temple ; nothing long may stay.
We build on tombs, and live our day, and die ;
From out our dust new towers and temples start ;
Our very name becomes a mystery.
What cities no man ever heard of lie
Under the glacier, in the mountain's heart,
In violet glooms beneath the moaning sea !

PURSUIT AND POSSESSION.

WHEN I behold what pleasure is Pursuit,
What life, what glorious eagerness, it is ;
Then mark how full Possession falls from this,
How fairer seems the blossom than the fruit,—
I am perplexed, and often stricken mute,
 Wondering which attained the higher bliss,
 The wingèd insect, or the chrysalis
It thrust aside with unreluctant foot.
Spirit of verse, which still eludes my art,
 You shapes of loveliness that still do haunt me,
O never, never rest upon my heart,
 If when I have thee I shall little want thee !
Still flit away in moonlight, rain, and dew,
Will-o'-the-wisp, that I may still pursue !

THE VALE OF SPIRITS.

IN deep green woods there lies a fairy glade,
Shut in by tawny hemlocks wild and tall ;
Its floor is laid with richest moss, and all
Its round is steeped in most delicious shade.
It is a spot for listening silence made.

Few sounds awake it save the wild bird's call,
And winds that murmur round its forest wall,
Like instruments at airy distance played.

'Tis there a still and stolen guest I lie,
And listen to the weird wood-spirits singing :
I hear their bell-like voices floating nigh,
From arches green and dewy dingles springing ;
They pass in elfin song and laughter by—
I hear their clear ha ! ha ! in deep dells ringing.

SONNETS IN SHADOW.

NO. XV.

WITH dulcimer, citole, and psaltery,
Tabor and pipes, and all the gauds of joy,
Has Love been painted, a soft, wanton boy
Dear to the nymphs and satyrs rude with glee.

They who in sorrow sit more truthfully
Know Love the sable-winged, strong to destroy
All life's illusions ; mighty to employ
The soul's best powers ; noble, pure, and free.

The rosy cherubs, like light butterflies,
Vanish with gloom, while night with flame
enspheres
The love which is immortal whoso dies.

He shows the soul the angel as its peers ;
Above the present bids the thought arise ;
And slakes the heart's thirst from his cup of tears.

SONNETS IN SHADOW.

NO. XX.

IF like the torch-flame which some Druid hoar
 Quenched in a sacrifice, the spirit dies
 When sense and seeing from the well-loved eyes
Fade utterly, and every empty shore

In all the desolate universe evermore
 Even to search of God himself denies
 Its shape or being, what can heart devise
Of hope or comfort for its anguish sore ?

There is no comfort save the bitter thought
 That we at least alone our sorrow bear ;
That if the soul for which we yearn is naught,

It cannot writhe in ever fresh despair
 That we are parted ; and that death has wrought
On us alone this hurt beyond repair.

SONNETS IN SHADOW.

NO. XXV.

As some flame-crookéd, venoméd Malay blade
 Writhes snake-like through a dusky woman's side,
 Its film of poison deep within to hide,
Does sorrow pierce, life's inmost to invade ;

While human comfort would our hearts persuade
 That in the hand of Time doth balm abide,
 Shall time our hearts from the old love divide?
Vain were a hope could so our faith degrade.

What have we left save fealty alone?
 Shall we to time this jewel yield, which yet
Vows of a faith eternal made our own?

The drop most bitter in woe's beaker set
 Is doubt of our soul's firmness : he has known
Grief's sharpest who has feared he may forget !

SONNETS IN SHADOW.

NO. XXIX.

OH, egotism of agony ! While we
Weep thus sore-stricken, filling earth with moan,
The feet of those we love, through ways unknown,
Brought into lands of living light may be.

E'en our tear-blinded eyes can dimly see
What heights are reached by sorrow's paths alone,
Where heavenly joy and radiance shall atone ;
For gloom and woe have held us utterly ;

And sure our dead, loftier of soul, and now
Free from the weakness human sight doth mar,
Must death with power and vision new endow.

If we, blind, groping, feel the truth afar,
They wear its very radiance on their brow.
Death takes a rush-light, but he gives a star !

WAITING FOR WINTER.

WHAT honey in the year's last flowers can hide,
These little yellow butterflies may know :
With falling leaves they waver to and fro,
Or on the swinging tops of asters ride.
But I am weary of the summer's pride
And sick September's simulated show :
Why do the colder winds delay to blow
And bring the pleasant hours that we abide ;
To curtained alcove and sweet household talks,
Or sweeter silence by our flickering Lars,
Returning late from Autumn evening walks
Upon the frosty hills, while reddening Mars
Hangs low between the withered mullein stalks,
And upward throngs the host of winter stars !

Τὸ Πᾶν.

THE little creek which yesterday I saw
 Ooze through the sedges, and each brackish vein
 That sluiced the marsh, now filled and then again
Sucked dry to glut the sea's unsated maw,
All ebb and flow by the same rhythmic law
 That times the beat of the Atlantic main—
 They also fastened to the swift moon's train
By unseen cords that no less strongly draw.
So, poet, may thy life's small tributary
 Threading some bitter marsh, obscure, alone,
Feel yet one pulse with the broad estuary :
 That bears an emperor's fleets through half a zone
May wait upon the same high luminary
 And pitch its voice to the same ocean's tone.

THE SINGER OF ONE SONG.

HE sang one song and died—no more but that :
A single song and carelessly complete.
He would not bind and thresh his chance-grown
wheat,
Nor bring his wild fruit to the common vat,
To store the acid rinsings, thin and flat,
Squeezed from the press or trodden under feet.
A few slow beads, blood-red and honey-sweet,
Oozed from the grape, which burst and spilled its fat.
But Time, who soonest drops the heaviest things
That weight his pack, will carry diamonds long.
So through the poets' orchestra, which weaves
One music from a thousand stops and strings,
Pierces the note of that immortal song :—
“ High over all the lonely bugle grieves.”

A PORTRAIT.

IN the white sweetness of her dimpled chin
The pink points of her perfumed fingers press,
And 'round her tremulous mouth's loveliness
The tears and smiles a sudden strife begin :
First one and then the other seems to win :
And o'er her drooping eyes a golden tress
Falls down to hide what else they might confess
Their blue-veined lids are striving to shut in.
The yellow pearls that bind her throat about
With her pale bosom's throbbing rise or fall :
The while her thoughts like carrier-doves have
fled
To that far land where armies clash and shout,
And where, beyond love's reach, a soldier tall
With staring eyes and broken sword lies dead.

DAHKOTA.

SEA-LIKE in billowy distance, far away

The half-broke prairies stretch on every hand ;
How wide the circuit of their summer day—

What measureless acres of primeval land,
Treeless and birdless, by no eyesight spanned !
Looking along the horizon's endless line

Man seems a pigmy in these realms of space ;
No segment of our planet—so divine—

Turns up such beauty to the moon's fair face !
Here are soft grasses, flowers of tender hue,
Palimpsests of the old and coming race,
Vistas most wonderful, and vast and new ;
And see—above—where giant lightnings play,
From what an arch the sun pours forth the day !

IF THE ROSE COULD SPEAK.

WITHIN the rose I found a trembling tear,
Close curtained in a gloom of crimson night
By tender petals from the outer light,
I plucked the flower and held it to my ear,
And thought within its fervid breast to hear
A smothered heart-beat throbbing soft and low.
I heard its busy life-blood gently flow,
Now far away and now so strangely near.
Ah, thought I, if these silent lips of flame
Could be unsealed and fling into the air
Their woe, their passion, and in speech proclaim
Their warm intoxication of despair ;—
Then would I give the rose into thy hand ;
Thou couldst its voice, beloved, not withstand.

THY WONDROUS NAME.

How can I lightly speak thy wondrous name,
Which breathes the airy fragrance of thyself,
As might, far straying from his flower, the elf
Hold yet a breath within his fragile frame
Of the flower's soul, betraying whence he came?
I too, beloved, though we stray apart,
Since in the vestal temple of thy heart
I dwell secure, glow with a sacred flame.
A breath of thy sweet self unto me clings—
A wondrous voice, as of large unborn deeds,
With deep resoundings, through my being rings,
And unto wider realms of vision leads.
And dead to me are sorrow, doubt, and pain ;
The slumbering god within me wakes again.

MUTATION.

THEY talk of short-lived pleasure—be it so—

Pain dies as quickly : stern, hard-featured pain
Expires, and lets her weary prisoner go.

The fiercest agonies have shortest reign ;
And after dreams of horror, comes again
The welcome morning with its rays of peace.

Oblivion, softly wiping out the stain,
Makes the strong secret pangs of shame to cease :
Remorse is virtue's root ; its fair increase

Are fruits of innocence and blessedness :
Thus joy, o'erborne and bound, doth still release
His young limbs from the chains that round him
press.

Weep not that the world changes—did it keep
A stable, changeless state, 'twere cause indeed to
weep.

MIDSUMMER.

A POWER is on the earth and in the air
From which the vital spirit shrinks afraid,
And shelters him, in nooks of deepest shade,
From the hot steam and from the fiery glare.
Look forth upon the earth—her thousand plants
Are smitten ; even the dark sun-loving maize
Faints in the field beneath the torrid blaze ;
The herd beside the shaded fountain pants ;
For life is driven from all the landscape brown ;
The bird has sought his tree, the snake his den,
The trout floats dead in the hot stream, and men
Drop by the sun-stroke in the populous town :
As if the Day of Fire had dawned, and sent
Its deadly breath into the firmament.

OCTOBER.

AY, thou art welcome, heaven's delicious breath,
When woods begin to wear the crimson leaf
And suns grow meek, and the meek suns grow brief,
And the year smiles as it draws near its death,
Wind of the sunny South ! Oh still delay
In the gay woods and in the golden air,
Like to a good old age released from care,
Journeying, in long serenity, away.
In such a bright, late quiet, would that I
Might wear out life like thee, 'mid bowers and
brooks,
And, dearer yet, the sunshine of kind looks
And music of kind voices ever nigh ;
And, when my last sand twinkled in the glass,
Pass silently from men, as thou dost pass.

NOVEMBER.

YET one smile more, departing, distant sun !

One mellow smile through the soft vapory air,
Ere, o'er the frozen earth, the loud winds run,

Or snows are sifted o'er the meadows bare.

One smile on the brown hills and naked trees,

And the dark rocks whose summer wreaths are cast,
And the blue gentian-flower, that, in the breeze,

Nods lonely, of her beauteous race the last.

Yet a few sunny days, in which the bee

Shall murmur by the hedge that skirts the way,

The cricket chirp upon the russet lea,

And man delight to linger in thy ray.

Yet one rich smile, and we will try to bear

The piercing winter frost, and winds, and darkened air.

WILLIAM TELL.

CHAINS may subdue the feeble spirit, but thee,
Tell, of the iron heart ! they could not tame !
For thou wert of the mountains ; they proclaim
The everlasting creed of liberty—
That creed is written on the untrampled snow,
Thundered by torrents which no power can hold,
Save that of God, when He sends forth His cold,
And breathed by winds that through the free heaven
blow.

Thou, while thy prison-walls were dark around,
Didst meditate the lesson Nature taught,
And to thy brief captivity was brought
A vision of thy Switzerland unbound.
The bitter cup they mingled, strengthened thee
For the great work to set thy country free.

DEAD IN BOHEMIA.

IRWIN RUSSELL.

Died in New Orleans, December 1879.

SMALL was thy share of all this world's delight,
And scant thy poet's crown of flowers of praise ;
Yet ever catches quaint of quaint old days
Thou sang'st, and, singing, kept thy spirit bright
Even as to lips the winds of winter bite
Some outcast wanderer sets his flute and plays
Till at his feet blossom the icy ways,
And from the snowdrift's bitter wasting white
He hears the uprising carol of the lark,
Soaring from clover seas with summer ripe—
While freeze upon his cheek glad, foolish tears.
Ah ! let us hope that somewhere in thy dark,
Herrick's full note, and Suckling's pleasant pipe,
Are sounding still their solace in thine ears.

IF SO.

IF so there were a spirit, poised in peace
Above all wind-gusts in the heavens high,
And he might mark us mortals laugh or cry,
According as the gloomèd clouds increase
Or suns beguile them into golden fleece,
Methinks he would be like to smile, to sigh
(So placid he, so far within the sky,
And knowing God's great love can never cease),
That we the puny yet the prideful race
Must change as skies change; be like babes that fret
Whenso their yearning mother moves her breast
To ease her mothering, or turns her face
Aside a moment, reaching out to get
Some wrapping soft to lull their limbs to rest.

THE HARDEST LOT.

To look upon the face of a dead friend
Is hard ; but 'tis not more than we can bear
If, haply, we can see peace written there,—
Peace after pain, and welcome so the end,
Whate'er the past, whatever death may send.
Yea, and that face a gracious smile may wear,
If love till death was perfect, sweet, and fair ;
But there is woe from which may God defend :
To look upon our friendship lying dead,
While we live on, and eat, and drink, and sleep—
Mere bodies from which all the soul has fled—
And that dead thing year after year to keep
Locked in cold silence in its dreamless bed :—
There must be hell while there is such a deep.

MUSIC.

TAKE of the maiden's and the mother's sigh,
Of childhood's dream, and hope that age doth bless,
Of roses and the south wind's tenderness,
Of fir-tree's shadow, tint of sunset sky,
Of moon on meadow where the stream runs by,
Of lover's kiss, his diffident caress,
Of blue eyes' yellow, brown eyes' darker, tress,
Of echoes from the morning bird on high,
Of passion of all pulses of the Spring,
Of prayer from every death-bed of the Fall,
Of joy and woe that sleep and waking bring,
Of tremor of each blood-beat great and small;
Now, pour into the empty soul each thing,
And let His finger touch that moveth all.

AN AUTUMN NIGHT.

WHAT mellow radiance wraps the slumbering world,
Soothing its harshness with benignant hand !
Against a lustrous amber background stand
Black-bordered leaves and branches loosely-swirled ;
In flushed or citrine-tinted heaps close-curved
The apples rest ; the orange pumpkins yield
To cumbrous sleep ; and on the spreading field
The tasselled tents of ripened corn are furled.

Elusive spirits flutter everywhere
'Mid moist brown leaves, and all the vaporous air
Is filled with whispering in an unknown tongue.
Yet not unknown ; Thy praise is every sound,
The teeming earth Thine altar is, fruit-crowned,
The moon a golden censer near it swung.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

THOU wast not robbed of wonder when youth fled,
But still the bud had promise to thine eyes,
And beauty was not sundered from surprise,
And reverent, as reverend, was thy head.
Thy life was music, and thou mad'st it ours,
Not thine, crude scorn of gentle household things;
And yet thy spirit had the sea-bird's wings,
Nor rested long among the chestnut-flowers.
Spain's coast of charm, and all the North Sea's cold
Thou knewest, and thou knewest the soul of eld,
And dusty scroll and volume we beheld
To gold transmuted—not to hard-wrought gold,
But that clear shining of the eastern air,
When Helios rising shakes the splendour of his hair.

THE PINES AND THE SEA.

BEYOND the low marsh-meadows and the beach,
Seen through the hoary trunks of windy pines,
The long blue level of the ocean shines.
The distant surf, with hoarse, complaining speech,
Out from its sandy barrier seems to reach ;
And while the sun behind the woods declines,
The moaning sea with sighing boughs combines,
And waves and pines make answer, each to each.
O melancholy soul, whom far and near,
In life, faith, hope, the same sad undertone
Pursues from thought to thought ! thou needs must
 hear
An old refrain, too much, too long thine own :
'Tis thy mortality infects thine ear ;
The mournful strain was in thyself alone.

THE HUMAN FLOWER.

I.

IN the old void of unrecorded time,
In long, slow aeons of the voiceless past,
A seed from out the weltering fire-mist cast
Took root—a struggling plant that from its prime
Through rudiments uncouth, through rock and slime,
Grew, changing form and issue—and clinging fast,
Stretched its aspiring tendrils—till at last
Shaped like a spirit it began to climb
Beyond its rugged stem, with leaf and bud
Still burgeoning to greet the sunlit air
That clothed its regal top with love and power,
And compassed it as with a heavenly flood
Until it burst in bloom beyond compare,
The world's consummate, peerless human flower.

THE HUMAN FLOWER.**II.**

SHALL that bright flower the countless ages toiled
And travailed to bring forth—shall that rare rose,
Whose bloom and fragrance earth and heaven uncloset
Their treasures to enrich, by death be foiled?
Its matchless splendour trampled down and spoiled?
Shall that Celestial Love—who watched its throes
Through centuries of long struggles and of woes,
And freed it from the old Serpent round it coiled;
Who tended it, and reared its glorious head
Above the brambles and the poisonous marsh,
And shielded it when zones were cased in ice—
Leave it to perish when the summons harsh
Of death is rung,—or, ere its leaves are shed,
Transplant it to his realm of Paradise?

LIFE AND DEATH.

I.

O SOLEMN portal, veiled in mist and cloud,
Where all who have lived throng in, an endless line,
Forbid to tell by backward look or sign
What destiny awaits the advancing crowd ;
Bourne crossed but once with no return allowed :
Dumb, spectral gate, terrestrial yet divine ;
Beyond whose arch all powers and fates combine,
Pledged to divulge no secrets of the shroud.
Close, close behind we step, and strive to catch
Some whisper in the dark, some glimmering light ;
Through circling whirls of thought intent to snatch
A drifting hope—a faith that grows to sight ;
And yet assured, whatever may befall,
That must be somehow best that comes to all.

LIFE AND DEATH.

II.

IF death be final, what is life, with all
Its lavish promises, its thwarted aims,
Its lost ideals, its dishonoured claims,
Its uncompleted growth? A prison wall,
Whose heartless stones but echo back our call;
An epitaph recording but our names;
A puppet-stage where joys and griefs and shames
Furnish a demon jesters' carnival;
A plan without a purpose or a form;
A roofless temple; an unfinished tale.
And men like madrepores through calm and storm
Toil, die to build a branch of fossil frail,
And add from all their dreams, thoughts, acts, belief,
A few more inches to a coral-reef.

SURPRISES.

I.

O EARTH, that had so long in darkness lain,
Waiting and listening for the Voice that cried,
“Let there be light!”—on thy first eventide
What woe, what fear, wrung thy dumb soul with
pain !

In darkling space down dropt the red sun, slain,
With all his banners drooping. Far and wide
Spread desolation’s vast and blackening tide.
How couldst thou know that day would dawn again ?

But the long hours wore on, till lo ! pale gleams
Of faint, far glory lit the eastern skies,
Broadening and reddening till the sun’s full beams
Broke in clear, golden splendour on thine eyes.
Darkness and brooding anguish were but dreams,
Lost in a trembling wonder of surprise !

SURPRISES.

II.

EVEN so, O Life, all tremulous with woe,
Thou too didst cower when, without sound or jar,
From the high zenith sinking fast and far,
Thy sun went out of heaven! How couldst thou
know

In that dark hour, that never tide could flow
So ebon-black, nor ever mountain-bar
Breast night so deep, without or moon or star,
But that the morning yet again must glow?
God never leaves thee in relentless dark.
Slowly the dawn on unbelieving eyes
Breaketh at last. Day brightens,—and, oh hark!
A flood of bird-song from the tender skies!
From storm and darkness thou hast found an ark,
Shut in with this great marvel of surprise!

DARKNESS.

COME, blessed Darkness, come, and bring thy balm
For eyes grown weary of the garish Day !
Come with thy soft, slow steps, thy garments grey,
Thy veiling shadows, bearing in thy palm
The poppy-seeds of slumber, deep and calm !
Come with thy patient stars, whose far-off ray
Steals the hot fever of the soul away,
Thy stillness, sweeter than a chanted psalm !
O blessed Darkness, Day indeed is fair,
And Light is dear when Summer days are long,
And one by one the harvesters go by ;
But so is rest sweet, and surcease from care,
And folded palms, and hush of evensong,
And all the unfathomed silence of the sky !

TO-MORROW

I.

MYSTERIOUS One, inscrutable, unknown,
A silent Presence, with averted face,
Whose lineaments no mortal eye can trace,
And robes of trailing darkness round thee thrown,
Over the midnight hills thou comest alone !
What thou dost bring to me from farthest space,
What blessing or what ban, what dole, what grace,
I may not know. Thy secrets are thine own !
Yet, asking not for lightest word or sign
To tell me what the hidden fate may be,
Without a murmur, or a quickened breath,
Unshrinkingly I place my hand in thine,
And through the shadowy depths go forth with thee
To meet, as thou shalt lead, or life, or death !

TO-MORROW.

II.

THEN, if I fear not thee, thou veiled One,
Whose face I know not, why fear I to meet
Beyond the everlasting hills her feet
Who cometh when all Yesterdays are done?
Shall I, who have proved thee good, thy sister shun?
O thou To-morrow, who dost feel the beat
Of life's long, rhythmic pulses, strong and sweet,
In the far realm that hath no need of sun—
Thou who art fairer than the fair To-day
That I have held so dear, and loved so much—
When, slow descending from the hills divine,
Thou summonest me to join thee on thy way,
Let me not shrink nor tremble at thy touch,
Nor fear to break thy bread and drink thy wine!

“O EARTH ! ART THOU NOT WEARY ?”

O EARTH ! art thou not weary of thy graves ?

Dear, patient Mother Earth, upon thy breast

How are they heaped from farthest east to west !

From the dim north, where wild the storm-wind raves

O'er the cold surge that chills the shore it laves,

To sunlit isles by softest seas caressed,

Where roses bloom alway and song-birds nest,

How thick they lie—like flecks upon the waves !

There is no mountain-top so far and high,

No desert so remote, no vale so deep,

No spot by man so long untenanted,

But the pale moon, slow marching up the sky,

Sees over some lone grave the shadows creep !

O Earth ! art thou not weary of thy dead ?

THE PAST.

IN her strange, shadowy coronet she weareth
The faded jewels of an earlier time ;
An ancient sceptre in her hand she beareth—
The purple of her robe is past its prime.
Through her thin silvery locks still dimly shineth
The flower-wreath woven by pale Memory's fingers.
Her heart is withered—yet it strangely shineth
In its lone urn, a light that fitful lingers.
With her low, muffled voice of mystery,
She reads old legends from Time's mouldering
pages ;
She telleth the Present the recorded history
And change perpetual of bygone ages :
Her pilgrim feet still seek the haunted sod
Once ours, but now by naught but Memory's footsteps
trod.

OTHER WORLDS.

I SOMETIMES muse, when my adventurous gaze
Has roamed the starry arches of the night,
That were I dowered with strong angelic sight,
All would look changed in those pale heavenly ways.
What wheeling worlds my vision would amaze !
What chasms of gloom would thrill me and affright !
What rhythmic equipoise would rouse delight !
What moons would beam on me, what suns would
blaze !

Then through my awed soul sweeps the larger thought
Of how creation's edict may have set
Vast human multitudes on those far spheres
With towering passions to which mine mean naught,
With majesties of happiness, or yet
With agonies of unconjectured tears !

EARTHQUAKE.

A GIANT of awful strength, he dumbly lies
Far-prisoned among the solemn deeps of earth ;
The sinewy grandeurs of his captive girth,—
His great-thewed breast, colossally-moulded thighs,
And arms thick-roped with muscle of mighty size,
Repose in slumber where no dream gives birth
For months, even years, to any grief or mirth ;
A slumber of tranquil lips, calm-lidded eyes !

Yet sometimes to his spirit a dream will creep
Of the old glad past when clothed in dauntless pride
He walked the world, unchained by tyrannous
powers ;
And then, while he tosses restlessly in sleep,
Dark, terrible graves for living shapes yawn wide,
Or a city shrieks among her tottering towers !

INDIAN SUMMER.

DULLED to a drowsy fire, one hardly sees
The sun in heaven, where this broad smoky round
Lies ever brooding at the horizon's bound ;
And through the gaunt knolls, on monotonous leas,
Or through the damp wood's troops of naked trees,
Rustling the brittle ruin along their ground,
Like sighs from souls of perished hours, resound
The melancholy melodies of the breeze !

So ghostly and strange a look the blurred world wears,
Viewed from the flowerless garden's dreary squares,
That now, while these weird vaporous days exist,
It would not seem a marvel if where we walk,
We met, dim-glimmering on its thorny stalk,
Some pale intangible rose with leaves of mist !

SLEEP'S THRESHOLD.

WHAT footstep but has wandered free and far
Amid that Castle of Sleep whose walls were planned
By no terrestrial craft, no human hand,
With towers that point to no recorded star?
Here sorrows, memories, and remorses are,
Roaming the long, dim rooms or galleries grand;
Here the lost friends our spirits yet demand
Gleam through mysterious door-ways left ajar.

But of the uncounted throngs that ever win
The halls where Slumber's dusky witcheries rule,
Who after waking, may reveal aright
By what phantasmal means he entered in?—
What porch of cloud, what vapory vestibule,
What stairway quarried from the mines of night?

A TIGER-LILY.

STRANGE that in your dark-dappled sanguine flower
The sculpturesque repose can still endure
Of that celestial lily, wrought so pure
It lives as chastity's white type this hour !
By what mysterious art, what baleful power,
Did you, Diana of all blooms, allure
From Nature's mood this Maenad vestiture,
And mock with gaudy tints your taintless dower ?

Nay, long ago, I dream, through some warm dell
Of Asian lands a weary tiger stole
Where you, in pale bud, felt your first dew's cling ;
And while he slept beneath you, it befell
That all his deadly beauty pierced your soul
And made you this fantastic sultry thing !

SILENCE.

ALL search of yours but ineffectual seems
 To gain some coign of refuge, year by year ;
 Since far in loneliest woods, in wastes austere,
Winds call, beasts wander, or yet the vulture screams.
With hated sounds of life all nature teems,
 And even among the deeps of sleep you hear
 Voices now clad in distance or now clear,
That float forever from the lips of dreams !

But weary of spirit, and affrighted too,
 At last you hurry away, with footsteps fleet,
 To find, in chaos, torpor, and eclipse,
Death, your one lover inalienably true,
 Encircled by whose ghostly arms you meet
 The awful icy passion of his lips !

SUICIDE.

INVISIBLE as a wind along the sky,
She ever wanders o'er the earth immense,
A spirit of beauty but malevolence,
With foot unechoing and with furtive eye.
She loathes and shuns all haunts where peace may lie,
Or love, and every joy engendered thence,
Yet prowls to wait, with wary and avid sense,
For sorrow's heaviest and most burning sigh !

Then, when some dreary sufferer darkly fails
To find in life's chill heaven one starry trace,
One hope no menace of despair assails,
Toward him she steals with sure insidious pace,
And slowly to his desperate look unveils
The maddening glooms and splendours of her face !

TO T. S. S.

"C'était un démon se tordant sous un ange,
Un enfer sous un ciel."

—THÉOPHILE GAUTIER.

SEEING thy face, with all thy fluctuant hair
Falling in dull-gold opulence from thy brow,
Watching thy light-blue eyes, now fired or now
Laughterful, or now dim as with despair,
I wonder, friend, that it should be God's care
To have made at all, what matter when or how,
A being so sadly, desolately rare,
So beautifully incomplete as thou !

O rank black pool, with one star's imaged form !
O sweet rich-hearted rose, with rot at core !
O summer heaven, half purpled by stern storm !
O lily, with one white leaf dipt in gore !
O angel-shape, wherever curves and clings
The awful imminence of a devil's wings !

COMMONPLACES.

TROUBLED in spirit at the unvaried ways
Wherewith perpetually I seemed to view,
In regular and familiar retinue,
Coming and going, the processional days,
I yearned to mark with many a novel phase
This round of dull monotonies that I knew,
And treat life's commonplaces, dreary of hue,
As phantoms that the intellect sternly lays !

But wheresoe'er my wandering feet might be,
Like some persistent word that memory saith,
Or like a ship's own shadow on wastes of sea,
Or the very wind's inevitable breath,
I found, among all changes, following me
The dark ubiquitous commonplace of death !

SLEEP.

A YELLOW sunset, soft and dreamy of dye,
Met sharply by black fluctuant lines of grass ;
A river, glimmering like illumined glass,
And narrowing till it ends in distant sky ;
Pale scattered pools of luminous rain, that lie
In shadowy amplitudes of green morass ;
A crescent that the old moon, as moments pass,
Has turned to a silver acorn hung on high !

Now through this melancholy and silent land
Sleep walks, diaphanous-vestured, vaguely fair,
Within her vaporous robe and one dim hand
Much asphodel and lotus doth she bear,
Going lovely and low-lidded, with a band
Of dull-red poppies amid her dull-gold hair !

THE SEA'S VOICE.

I.

AROUND the rocky headlands, far and near,
The wakened ocean murmured with dull tongue,
Till all the coast's mysterious caverns rung
With the waves' voice, barbaric, hoarse, and drear.
Within this distant valley, with rapt ear,
I listened, thrilled, as though a spirit sung,
Or some gray god, as when the world was young,
Moaned to his fellow, mad with rage or fear.
Thus in the dark, ere the first dawn, methought,
The sea's deep roar and sullen surge and shock
Broke the long silence of eternity,
And echoed from the summits where God wrought,
Building the world, and ploughing the steep rock
With ploughs of ice-hills harnessed to the sea.

THE SEA'S VOICE.

II.

THE sea is never quiet ; east and west
The nations hear it, like the voice of fate ;
Within vast shores its strife makes desolate,
Still murmuring, 'mid storms that to its breas'
Return, as eagles screaming to their nest.
Is it the voice of worlds and isles that wait,
While old earth crumbles to eternal rest,
Or some hoar monster calling to his mate ?
O ye, that hear it moan about the shore,
Be still and listen ! that loud voice hath sung,
Where mountains rise, where desert sands are blown ;
And when man's voice is dumb, forevermore
'Twill murmur on, its craggy shores among,
Singing of gods and nations overthrown.

SUMMER'S LARGEES.

O DAYS of quietness and deep content,
That steal as gently and serenely by
As your own sunshine which at noon doth lie
In plenitude of golden ravishment
O'er every little spot that late was lent
To morning shadows,—fairer livery
Lady ne'er wore in fondest lover's eye
Than that which o'er the earth your suns have sent

Is each day's beauty but a transient bliss,—
One moment felt, then like a sweet note gone?
Rather 'tis like a wave which swelling, pours
O'er all the heart a flood of happiness,
And ebbing leaves along our being's shores
Strange tokens from immensities unknown.

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THE SILENT LIFE.

HAPPY the man who has the poet's heart,
E'en though he lack the poet's golden tongue !
Happy is he who having never sung
And hopeless e'er to sing though but small part
Of those fair visions that before him start
Still lives within a world forever young,
Still walks high fancies, noble thoughts among,
And feels the influence which the planets dart.

His life is fed from pure unfailing springs ;
And silent flows, a stranger to unrest,
Like some deep stream that finds its voiceless way
Amid the timorous haunts of all wild things,
And their unconscious beauty day by day
Mirrors within the quiet of its breast.

THE SONNET.

WHAT is a sonnet? 'Tis the pearly shell
That murmurs of the far-off murmuring sea ;
A precious jewel carved most curiously :
It is a little picture painted well.
What is a sonnet? 'Tis the tear that fell
From a great poet's hidden ecstasy ;
A two-edged sword, a star, a song—ah me !
Sometimes a heavy-tolling funeral bell.
This was the flame that shook with Dante's breath ;
The solemn organ whereon Milton played,
And the clear glass where Shakespeare's shadow
falls :
A sea this is—beware who ventureth !
For like a fjord the narrow floor is laid
Mid-ocean deep to the sheer mountain walls.

“DAY UNTO DAY UTTERETH SPEECH.”

THE speech that day doth utter, and the night,
Full oft to mortal ears it hath no sound ;
Dull are our eyes to read upon the ground
What's written there ; and stars are hid by light.
So when the dark doth fall, awhile our sight
Kens the unwonted orbs that circle round,
The quick in sleep our human sense is bound ;
Speechless for us the starry heavens and bright.
But when the day doth close there is one word
That's writ amid the sunset's golden embers ;
And one at morn ; by them our hearts are stirred :
Splendour of Dawn,—and Evening that remembers ;
These are the rhymes of God ; thus, line on line,
Our souls are moved to thoughts that are divine.

WRITTEN ON A FLY-LEAF OF "SHAKE-
SPEARE'S SONNETS."

WHEN shall true love be love without alloy :
Shine free at last from sinful circumstance !
When shall the canker of unheavenly chance
Eat not the bud of that most heavenly joy !
When shall true love meet love not as a coy
Retreating light that leads a deathful dance,
But as a firm fixed fire that doth enhance
The beauty of all beauty ! Will the employ
Of poets ever be too well to show
That mightiest love with sharpest pain doth writhe ;
That underneath the fair, caressing glove
Hides evermore the iron hand ; and though
Love's flower alone is good, if we could prove
Its perfect bloom, our breath slays like a scythe !

“MY LOVE FOR THEE DOTH MARCH LIKE
ARMÉD MEN.”

My love for thee doth march like arméd men
Against a queenly city they would take.
Along the army's front its banners shake ;
Across the mountain and the sun-smit plain
It steadfast sweeps as sweeps the steadfast rain ;
And now the trumpet makes the still air quake,
And now the thundering cannon doth awake
Echo on echo, echoing loud again.
But, lo ! the conquest higher than bard had sung ;
Instead of answering cannon comes a small
White flag ; the iron gates are open flung,
And flowers along the invaders' pathway fall.
The city's conquerors feast their foes among,
And their brave flags are trophies on her wall.

THE RIVER.

I KNOW thou art not that brown mountain-side,
Nor the pale mist that lies along the hills
And with white joy the deepening valley fills;
Nor yet the solemn river moving wide
Into that valley, where the hills abide
But whence those morning clouds on noiseless wheels
Shall lingering lift and, as the moonlight steals
From out the heavens, so into the heavens shall
glide.

I know thou art not this gray rock that looms
Above the water, fringed with scarlet vine;
Nor flame of burning meadow; nor the sedge
That sways and trembles at the river's edge.
But through all these, dear heart! to me there comes
Some melancholy, absent look of thine.

WEAL AND WOE.

O HIGHEST, strongest, sweetest woman-soul !
Thou holdest in the compass of thy grace
All the strange fate and passion of thy race:
Of the old, primal curse thou knowest the whole :
Thine eyes, too wise, are heavy with the dole,
The doubt, the dread of all this human maze ;
Thou in the virgin morning of thy days
Hast felt the bitter waters o'er thee roll.
Yet thou knowest, too, the terrible delight,
The still content, and solemn ecstasy
Whatever sharp, sweet bliss thy kind may know.
Thy spirit is deep for pleasure as for woe—
Deep as the rich, dark-caverned, awful sea
That the keen-winded, glimmering dawn makes
white.

HOLY LAND.

THIS is the earth he walked on ; not alone
That Asian country keeps the sacred stain ;
'Tis not alone the far Judæan plain,
Mountain and river ! Lo, the sun that shone
On him, shines now on us ; when day is gone
The moon of Galilee comes forth again
And lights our path as his : an endless chain
Of years and sorrows makes the round world one.
The air we breathe, he breathed,—the very air
That took the mould and music of his high
And godlike speech.—Since then shall mortal dare
With base thought front the ever-sacred sky,—
Soil with foul deed the ground whereon he laid
In holy death his pale, immortal head !

CONFESSION.

BELIEVE me, dear, unyielding though I be,
Ambitions flourish only in the sun—
In noisy daylight every race is run,
With lusty pride for all the world to see.
When darkness sinks the earth in mystery,
When eye or ear or sight or sound is none,
But death, a tide that waits to bear us on,
And life, a loosening anchor in the sea,
When time and space are huge about the soul,
And ties of custom lost beyond recall,
And courage as a garment in the flame,
Then all my spirit breaks without control,
Then the heart opens, then the hot tears fall
To prove me wholly woman that I am.

ULTIMA THULE.

THE blue heaven spreads before me with its keen
And countless eyes of brightness,—worlds are
there,—
The boldest spirit cannot spring, and dare
The peopled universe that burns between
This earth and nothing. Thought can wing its way
Swifter than lightning-flashes, or the beam
That hastens on the pinions of the morn ;
But, quicker than the glowing dart of day,
It tires and faints along the starry stream,—
A wave of suns through countless ether borne,
Though infinite, eternal ! yet one power
Sits on the Almighty Centre, whither tend
All worlds and beings from time's natal hour,
Till suns and all their satellites shall end.

LOVE'S IMAGINING.

DEAR Love, I sometimes think how it would be
If thou shouldst love me, if, on such a day,
O day of wonder ! thou shouldst come and say
I love thee, or but let me guess thy plea—
If once thine eyes should brighten suddenly,
If once thy step should hasten or delay
Because of me, if once thy hand should stay
A needless instant in my own ! Ah, me !
From such imaginings I wake and start,
And dull and worthless life's endeavours seem
Before the tender beauty of my dream—
And then I whisper my impatient heart,
“ Be still, be comforted, O heart of mine,
Thou art not all bereft, the dream is thine.”

MORNING IN VENICE.

'GAINST the dusk-gold of morn's candescent sky
Strike dome and campanile, sharp and clear,
Jangling sweet bells on the still city's ear.
Strange scents of musk and myrtle hover nigh ;
The frail pomegranate-blossoms, hanging high
Above the dark canal, drop straight and sheer,
Drift on, a crimson fleet, then disappear.
High-heap'd with sun-kiss'd fruits, the boats go by
With cadenc'd oar to the gay market-place,
Where purple, bloomy grapes, for very stress
Of swollen sweetness, burst and spill their wine ;
Where bronzed melons lie, in shade and shine,
And the Sea City's definite impress
Glow in swart splendour from each dusky face.

THE ATONING YESTERDAY.

YE daffodilian days, whose fallen towers
Shielded our paradisal prime from ill,
Fair Past, fair motherhood ! let come what will,
We, being yours, defy the anarch powers.
For us the happy tidings fell, in showers
Enjewelling the wind from every hill ;
We drained the sun against the winter's chill ;
Our ways were barricadoed in with flowers :

And if from skyey minsters now unhoused,
Earth's massy workings at the forge we hear,
The black roll of the congregated sea,
And war's live hoof : O yet, last year, last year
We were the lark-lulled shepherdlings, that drowsed
Grave-deep, at noon, in grass of Arcady !

AMONG THE FLAGS

In Doric Hall, Massachusetts State House.

DEAR witnesses, all-luminous, eloquent,
Stacked thickly on the tessellated floor !
The soldier-blood stirs in me, as of yore
In sire and grandsire who to battle went :
I seem to know the shaded valley tent,
The armed and bearded men, the thrill of war,
Horses that prance to hear the cannon roar,
Shrill bugle-calls, and camp-fire merriment.

And as fair symbols of heroic things,
Not void of tears mine eyes must e'en behold
These banners lovelier as the deeper marred :
A panegyric never writ for kings
On every tarnished staff and tattered fold ;
And by them, tranquil spirits standing guard.

ONE WAY OF LOVE.

I CANNOT measure for thee, drop by drop,
Thy draught of love, my hands, dear, tremble so :
Behold the chalice, how the bright drops glow
And still I pour, although thou bid'st me stop,
Till the rich wine mounts to the goblet's top,
And the dry earth receives the overflow.
Too generous am I? Ah, say not so !
Love that doth count its gifts is a weak prop
Whereon to stay a weary human heart.
Yes, draw me closer, love. Perchance I may,
Clasped in thine arms, forget the dreaded day
When thou, my love, my soul, my life's best part.
In cold satiety wilt turn thee round,
And dash the poor cup broken to the ground.

THE POET'S PRAISE.

XXI.

WHO summons back forgotten banished names?
Whose magic voice bids buried cities rise?
Who opes again the gates of paradise
Where gleaming sword of guardian angel flames?

Who fires the generous heart with godlike aims?
Who leads the way where Fame's high temple lies?
Who fills the soul with hope which never dies?
Who rouses courage while he passion tames?

The poet, he whose words are living things,
Who walks the earth clothed with creative might,
Who touches life's most hidden secret springs
And out of darkness brings the flood of light ;
Who speaks, and souls receive the dower of wings
And upward mount to the aëriel height.

THE POET'S PRAISE.

CXXXIII.

SHALL we believe the heavens less divine
Because earth moves and the great sun is still ?
Or is the world less fair because mere thrill
Of ether gives the stars the power to shine ?

Shall diamonds with less lustre fair necks twine,
Since we have found how Nature's cunning skill
Black carbon's heart with light has known to fill,
Kindling a lamp in darkness of deep mine ?

Not so to poet's eye shall it appear,
Whose wonder grows, with knowledge keeping pace ;
Who to all truth lends an impartial ear,
And behind law still sees God's hidden grace
Like a dim milky way when night is clear
And all the stars look on the young moon's face.

THE COMING OF THE WIND.

AN hour ago, and prostrate Nature lay
Like some sore-smitten creature nigh to death,
With feverish parched lips, with labouring breath,
And languid eyeballs darkening to the day.
A burning noontide ruled with merciless sway
Earth, wave, and air ; the ghastly-stretching heath,
The sullen trees, the fainting flowers beneath,
Drooped hopeless, shrivelling in the torrid ray ;—
When, like a sudden, cheerful trumpet blown
Far off by rescuing spirits, rose the wind
Urging great hosts of clouds ; the thunder's tone
Breaks into wrath ; the rainy cataracts fall.
But, pausing, lo, behold Creation shrined
In a new birth,—God's covenant clasping all !

OCTOBER.

THE passionate summer's dead ! the sky's aglow
With roseate flushes of matured desire,
The winds at eve are musical and low,
As sweeping chords of a lamenting lyre,
Far up among the pillared clouds of fire,
Whose pomp of strange procession upward rolls,
With gorgeous blazonry of pictured scrolls,
To celebrate the summer's past renown ;
Ah, me ! how regally the heavens look down
O'ershadowing beautiful autumnal woods
And harvest fields with hoarded increase brown
And deep-toned majesty of golden floods
That raise their solemn dirges to the sky,
To swell the purple pomp that floateth by.

**"TOO OFT THE POET IN ELABORATE
VERSE."**

Too oft the poet in elaborate verse,
Flushed with quaint images and gorgeous tropes,
Casteth a doubtful light, which is not hope's,
On the dark spot where Death hath sealed his curse
In monumental silence. Nature starts
Indignant from the sacrilege of words
That ring so hollow, and forlornly girds
Her great woe round her ; there's no trick of Art's
But shows most ghastly by a new-made tomb.
I see no balm in Gilead ; he is lost,
The beautiful soul that loved thee, thy life's bloom
Is withered by the sudden blighting frost ;
O Grief ! how mighty ; Creeds ! how vain ye are :
Earth presses closely, — Heaven is cold and far.

THE PHANTOM BELLS.

UPVEILED in yonder dim ethereal sea,
Its airy towers the work of phantom spells,
A viewless belfry tolls its wizard bells.
Pealed o'er this populous earth perpetually.
Some hear, some hear them not ; but aye they be
Laden with one strange note that sinks or swells,
Now dread as doom, now gentle as farewells,
Time's dirge borne ever toward eternity.
Each hour in measured breath sobs out and dies,
While the bell tolls its requiem,—“ *Passing, past,*”—
The sole sad burden of their long refrain.
Still, with those hours each pang, each pleasure flies,
Brief sweet, brief bitter,—all our days are vain,
Knolled into dread forgetfulness at last.

LIFE AND DEATH.

I FEAR thee not, O Death ! nay, oft I pine
To clasp thy passionless bosom to mine own,
And on thy heart sob out my latest moan,
Ere lapped and lost in thy strange sleep divine ;
But much I fear lest that chill breath of thine
Should freeze all tender memories into stone,—
Lest ruthless and malign Oblivion
Quench the last spark that lingers on love's shrine :
O God ! to moulder through dark, dateless years,
The while all loving ministries shall cease,
And time assuage the fondest mourner's tears !
Here lies the sting !—this, *this* it is to die !
And yet great Nature rounds all strife with peace,
And Life or Death, each rests in mystery !

EARTH ODOURS—AFTER RAIN.

LIFE-YIELDING fragrance of our Mother Earth !
Benignant breath exhaled from summer showers !—
All Nature dimples into smiles of flowers,
From unclosed woodland to trim garden girth :—
These perfumes softening the harsh soul of dearth
Are older than old Shinar's arrogant towers,—
And touched with visions of rain-freshened hours,
On Syrian hill-slopes ere the Patriarch's birth !
Nay ! the charmed fancy plays a subtler part !—
Lo ! banished Adam, his large, wondering eyes
Fixed on the trouble of the first dark cloud !
Lo ! tremulous Eve,—a pace behind, how bowed,—
Not dreaming, 'midst her painful pants of heart,
What balm shall fall from yonder ominous cloud !

AT LAST.

IN youth, when blood was warm and fancy high,
I mocked at death. How many a quaint conceit
I wove about his veiled head and feet,
Vaunting aloud, *Why need we dread to die?*
But now, enthralled by deep solemnity,
Death's pale phantasmal shade I darkly greet :
Ghostlike it haunts the hearth, it haunts the street,
Or drearier makes drear midnight's mystery.
Ah, soul-perplexing vision ! oft I deem
That antique myth is true which pictured death
A masked and hideous form all shrank to see ;
But at the last slow ebb of mortal breath,
Death, his mask melting like a nightmare dream,
Smiled,—heaven's high-priest of Immortality !

NIGHT.

'Tis solemn darkness ; the sublime of shade ;
Night, by no stars nor rising moon relieved ;
The awful blank of nothingness arrayed,
O'er which my eye-balls roll in vain, deceived.
Upward, around, and downward I explore,
E'en to the frontiers of the ebon air,
But cannot, though I strive, discover more
Than what seems one huge cavern of despair.
Oh, Night, art thou so grim, when, black and bare
Of moonbeams, and no cloudlets to adorn,
Like a nude Ethiop 'twixt two houris fair,
Thou stand'st between the evening and the morn ?
I took thee for an angel, but have wooed
A cacodæmon in mine ignorant mood.

THE DEAD.

How great unto the living seem the dead !
How sacred, solemn ; how heroic grown ;
How vast and vague, as they obscurely tread
The shadowy confines of the dim unknown !—
For they have met the monster that we dread,
Have learned the secret not to mortal shown.
E'en as gigantic shadows on the wall
The spirit of the daunted child amaze,
So on us thoughts of the departed fall,
And with phantasma fill our gloomy gaze.
Awe and deep wonder lend the living lines,
And hope and ecstasy the borrowed beams ;
While fitful fancy the full form divines,
And all is what imagination dreams.

BEYOND THE SUNSET.

HUSHED in a calm beyond mine utterance,
See in the western sky the evening spread ;
Suspended in its pale, serene expanse,
Like scattered flames, the glowing cloudlets red.
Clear are those clouds, and that pure sky's profound,
Transparent as a lake of hyaline ;
Nor motion, nor the faintest breath of sound,
Disturbs the steadfast beauty of the scene.
Far o'er the vault the winnowed welkin wide,
From the bronzed east unto the whitened west,
Moored, seem, in their sweet, tranquil, roseate pride,
Those clouds the fabled islands of the blest ;—
The lands where pious spirits breathe in joy,
And love and worship all their hours employ.

WINTER SKIES.

THE stars are glittering in the frosty sky,
Numerous as pebbles on a broad sea-coast ;
And o'er the vault the cloud-like galaxy
Has marshalled its innumerable host.
Alive all heaven seems ! with wondrous glow
Tenfold refulgent every star appears,
As if some wide, celestial gale did blow,
And thrice illumine the ever-kindled spheres.
Orbs, with glad orbs rejoicing, burning, beam
Ray-crowned, with lambent lustre in their zones,
Till o'er the blue, bespangled spaces seem
Angels and great archangels on their thrones ;
A host divine, whose eyes are sparkling gems,
And forms more bright than diamond diadems.

THE COMING OF MORN.

SEE how the Morn awakes. Along the sky
Proceeds she with her pale, increasing light,
And, from the depths of the dim canopy,
Drives out the shadows of departing night.
Lo, the clouds break, and gradually more wide
Morn openeth her bright, rejoicing gates ;
And ever, as the orient valves divide,
A costlier aspect on their breadth awaits.

Lo, the clouds break, and in each opened schism
The coming Phœbus lays huge beams of gold,
And roseate fire and glories that the prism
Would vainly strive before us to unfold ;
And, while I gaze, from out the bright abysm
A flaming disc is to the horizon rolled.

THE STREAM.

'Twas Sabbath morn. I lay 'neath pensive spell,
And saw, in reverie or waking dream,
My life elapse, in likeness of a stream
That in a slant and steady torrent fell,
As if it gushed beneath the force supreme
Of some high reservoir or lofty well.
E'en such a stream I saw as, from a bank
Verdant with mosses and perpetual dank,
I have observed leap forth when heavy rains
Have, through the uplands filtered, fed earth's veins
To bursting. This I saw with troubled eye,
Anticipating when the stream no more
In ceaseless, crystalline cascade should pour,
But sudden stop, or slowly dribble dry.

THE MYSTERY OF DOOM.

'Twas on a day, and in high, radiant heaven,
An angel lay beside a lake reclined,
Against whose shores the rolling waves were driven,
And beat the measure to the dancing wind.
There, rapt, he meditated on that story
Of how Jehovah did of yore expel
Heaven's aborigines from grace and glory,—
Those mighty angels that did dare rebel.
And, as he mused upon their dread abode
And endless penance, from his drooping hands
His harp sank down, and scattered all abroad
Its rosy garland on the golden sands;
His soul mute wondering that the All-wise Spirit
Should have allowed the doom of such demerit.

EVE.

LONE in the sunrise of primeval day,
More lovely than the virgin world around,
With fingers pressed on lips that made no sound,
She stood and gazed. Spread out before her lay
The future—and the clouds were rolled away.
The war of kings in empires still unfound,
The crash of cannon that should yet resound,
She heard, and saw the great world rock and sway.
Across the crimson sky above her head
There came a cry of children asking food ;
A wail of women for the nations' dead
Went upward to the stars. So pale she stood ;
Then to some secret place in Eden fled,
And wept in presage of her motherhood.

“THE SNOWING OF THE PINES.”

SOFTER than silence, stiller than still air,
Float down from high pine boughs the slender leaves.
The forest floor its annual boon receives
That comes like snowfall, tireless, tranquil, fair.
Gently they glide, gently they clothe the bare
Old rocks with grace. Their fall a mantle weaves
Of paler yellow than autumnal sheaves
Or those strange blossoms the witch-hazels wear.
Athwart long aisles the sunbeams pierce their way;
High up, the crows are gathering for the night;
The delicate needles fill the air; the jay
Takes through their golden mist his radiant flight;
They fall and fall, till at November's close
The snow-flakes drop as lightly—snows on snows.

THE BABY SORCERESS.

My baby sits beneath the tall elm-trees,
A wreath of tangled ribbons in her hands ;
She twines and twists the many-coloured strands,—
A little sorceress, weaving destinies.
Now the pure white she grasps ; now naught can please
But strips of crimson, lurid as the brands
From passion's fires ; or yellow, like the sands
That lend soft netting to the azure seas.
And so with sweet, incessant toil she fills
A summer hour, still following fancies new,
Till through my heart a sudden terror thrills
Lest, as she weaves, her aimless choice prove true.
Thank God ! our Fates proceed not from our wills :
The Power that spins the thread shall blend the hue.

JOSEPH WARREN, M.D.

TRAINED in the holy art whose lifted shield
Wards off the darts a never-slumbering foe,
By hearth and wayside lurking, waits to throw.
Oppression taught his helpful arm to wield
The slayer's weapon : on the murderous field
The fiery bolt he challenged laid him low,
Seeking its noblest victim. Even so
The charter of a nation must be sealed !
The healer's brow the hero's honours crowned,
From lowliest duty called to loftiest deed.
Living, the oak-leaf wreath his temples bound ;
Dying, the conqueror's laurel was his meed,
Last on the broken ramparts' turf to bleed
Where Freedom's victory in defeat was found.

June 11th, 1876.

AN IDEAL.

I OFTTIMES see her face here in the gloom,
When—dreaming by my fire as dreamers dream—
I watch the flickering fire-lights, till they seem,
Like magic shuttles on a shadowy loom,
To weave strange pictures in the dusky room.
For her face 'mid the others there I find ;
It thrills me with a sense all undefined—
Vague as the fragrance of an old perfume.

Her hair—the light that shimmers on the sea,—
Her wistful mouth—a red bud not half blown,—
Her tender eyes—a cloudless summer sky,—
Flash on my sight, a glimpse of rapture nigh,
Then fade away and leave me here alone . . .
Her heart—but Love himself holds that in fee.

BURNT SHIPS.

UPON the hopeless desert of her love
I landed, lured by glamour of her face.
And, scarce on shore,—a desolate strange place,—
I said,—but surely some green cedar grove
Awaits me, proffering its cooling shade,
And in its depths melodious fountains spring :
So tear the canvas from the masts and bring
Planks, beams, and spars until the pile be laid.
Then with my own mad hands I lit the fire,
And watched with fevered eyes the dark mass burn,
So blotting out the prospect of return.
But daily cools the pulse of my desire,
And bitter is the redness of her lips.
Oh ! god of love, why did I burn my ships ?

OUTRE-MORT.

SUPPOSE the dreaded messenger of death
Should hasten steps that seem, though sure, so slow,
And soon should whisper with his chilly breath :
“ Arise ! thine hour has sounded, thou must go ;
For they that earliest taste life’s holiest feast
Must early fast, lest, grown too bold, they dare
Of them that follow after seize the share.”

Then, though my pulse’s beat forever ceased,
If where I slumbered thou shouldst chance to pass,
Though grave-bound, I thy presence should discern,
Heedless of coffin-lid and tangled grass,
Upward to kiss thy feet my lips would yearn ;
And did one spark of love thy heart inflame,
With the old rapture I should call thy name.

BONDAGE.

“AND this is freedom?” cried the serf. “At last
I tread free soil, the free air blows on me;”
And, wild to learn the sweets of liberty,
With eager hope his bosom bounded fast.
But not for naught had the long years amassed
Habit of slavery; among the free
He still was servile, and, disheartened, he
Crept back to the old bondage of the past.
Long did I bear a hard and heavy chain
Wreathèd with amaranth and asphodel,
But through the flower-breaths stole the heavy pain.
I cast it off and fled, but ’twas in vain;
For when once more I passed by where it fell,
I took it up and bound it on again.

COMMUNION.

ONE cannot draw the bars against the friends
And guests that crowd for entrance at his gate .
He opes, inviting, nor the simple state
Of his abode against their train defends,
But there are chambers where the lover tends
His sacred fires ; where no feet penetrate,
Save of immortals ; where, early and late,
The breath of prayer and sacrifice ascends.
In such a spot as this, as in the shrine
Of some white temple, in a dusk made sweet
With incense, far from outer noise and heat,
And hollow haste of them that part and meet,
Surrounded by dim presences divine,
My soul communes eternally with thine.

THE ZONE OF CALMS.

As yearning currents from the trackless snows,
And silent Polar seas, unceasing sweep
To South, to North, and linger not where leap
Red fires from glistening cones,—nor where the rose
Has triumph on the snow-fed Paramos,
In upper air,—nor yet where lifts the deep
Its silver Atollis on whose bosoms sleep
The purple sponges ; and, as in repose
Meeting at last, they sink upon the breast
Of that sweet tropic sea, whose spicy balms
And central heat have drawn them to its arms, —
So soul seeks soul, unsatisfied, repress,
Till in Love's tropic met, they sink to rest,
At peace forever in the "Zone of Calms."

POPPIES ON THE WHEAT.

ALONG Ancona's hills the shimmering heat,
A tropic tide of air with ebb and flow
Bathes all the fields of wheat until they glow
Like flashing seas of green, which toss and beat
Around the vines. The poppies lithe and fleet
Seem running, fiery torchmen, to and fro
To mark the shore.

The farmer does not know
That they are there. He walks with heavy feet,
Counting the bread and wine by autumn's gain,
But I,—I smile to think that days remain
Perhaps to me in which, though bread be sweet
No more, and red wine warm my blood in vain,
I shall be glad remembering how the fleet,
Lithe poppies ran like torchmen with the wheat.

MAZZINI.

THAT he is dead the sons of kings are glad ;
And in their beds the tyrants sounder sleep.

Now he is dead his martyrdom will reap
Late harvest of the palms it should have had
In life. Too late the tardy lands are sad.

His unclaimed crown in secret they will keep
For ages, while in chains they vainly weep,
And vainly grope to find the roads he bade
Them take. O glorious soul ! there is no dearth
Of worlds. There must be many better worth

Thy presence and thy leadership than this.
No doubt, on some great sun to-day, thy birth
Is for a race, the dawn of Freedom's bliss,
Which but for thee it might for ages miss.

BURNT SHIPS.

O LOVE, sweet Love, who came with rosy sail
And foaming prow across the misty sea !

O Love, brave Love, whose faith was full and free
That lands of sun and gold, which could not fail,
Lay in the west, that bloom no wintry gale
Could blight, and eyes whose love thine own
should be,

Called thee, with steadfast voice of prophecy,
To shores unknown !

O Love, poor Love, avail
Thee nothing now thy faiths, thy braveries ;
There is no sun, no bloom ; a cold wind strips
The bitter foam from off the wave where dips
No more thy prow ; the eyes are hostile eyes ;
The gold is hidden ; vain thy tears and cries ;
O Love, poor Love, why didst thou burn thy ships ?

TIDES.

O PATIENT shore, thou canst not go to meet
Thy love, the restless sea, how comfortest
Thou all thy loneliness? Art thou at rest,
When, loosing his strong arms from round thy feet,
He turns away? Know'st thou, however sweet
That other shore may be, that to thy breast
He must return? And when in sterner test
He folds thee to a heart which does not beat,
Wraps thee in ice, and gives no smile, no kiss,
To break long wintry days, still dost thou miss
Naught from thy trust? Still wait, unfaltering,
The higher, warmer waves which leap in spring?
O sweet, wise shore, to be so satisfied!
O heart, learn from the shore! Love has a tide!

HER EYES.

THAT they are brown, no man will dare to say
He knows. And yet I think that no man's look
Ever those depths of light and shade forsook,
Until their gentle pain warned him away.
Of all sweet things I know but one which may
Be likened to her eyes.

When, in deep nook
Of some green field, the water of a brook
Makes lingering whirling eddy in its way,
Round soft drowned leaves ; and in a flash of sun
They turn to gold, until the ripples run
Now brown, now yellow, changing as by some
Swift spell.

I know not with what body come
The saints. But this I know, my Paradise
Will mean the resurrection of her eyes.

FEALTY.

THE thing I count and hold as fealty—

The only fealty to give or take—

Doth never reckoning keep, and coldly make
Bond to itself with this or that to be
Content as wage ; the wage unpaid, to free
Its hand from service, and its love forsake,
Its faith cast off, as one from dreams might wake
At morn, and smiling watch the vision flee.
Such fealty is treason in disguise,
Who trusts it, his death-warrant sealed doth bear.
Love looks at it with angry, wondering eyes ;
Love knows the face true fealty doth wear,
The pulse that beats unchanged by alien air,
Or hurts, or crimes, until the loved one dies.

ST. MARTIN'S SUMMER.

AFTER the summer's fierce and thirsty glare,
After the falling leaves and falling rain,
When harsh winds beat the fields of ripened grain
And autumn's pennons from the branches flare,
There comes a stilly season, soft and fair,
When clouds are lifted, winds are hushed again,—
A phantom Summer hovering without pain
In the veiled radiance of the quiet air ;
When, folding down the line of level seas,
A silver mist at noonday faintly broods,
And like becalmèd ships the yellow trees
Stand islanded in windless solitudes,
Each leaf unstirred and parching for the breeze
That hides and lingers northward in the woods.

PARADISE REGAINED.

THE circling hills of woods and clouds snow-white
Held, in the golden hour of eventide,
The lake by which I walked, and seemed to hide
From view a world yet lovelier, whose light
Streamed up behind their heights and made them glow,
As wrapped in purest flame, and flung on high
Bright flakes of glory 'gainst the pale blue sky
Which bridged with paths of light the lake below.
I felt sweet music, that I could not hear,
I saw a poem that I could not read,
"What place is this," I cried! Lo, at my need,
Two lovers passed,—'Twas *Paradise!* for clear
I saw it shining in his happy eyes,
I heard it murmur'd in her low replies.

RED LILIES.

STRIKE fuller chords, or let the music rest !

Of tender songs the world has yet no dearth,

Which scarce survive the moment of their birth.

Be thine in passionate cadences expressed,

And banish morning-glories from thy breast !

A purple dream-flower of the woods is worth

So little in the gardens of the earth ;

If gift thou givest, give what we love best.

Since Life is wild with tears, and red with wrongs,

Let these red lilies typify thy songs,

If with full flame thou would'st be comforted.

Since Life is red with wrongs, and wild with tears,

Oh move us, haunt us, kill our souls with fears,

And we will praise thee,—after thou art dead !

THE TRAVELLER.

WHEN in the dark we slowly drift away
O'er unknown seas, and busy thoughts at last
Are quieted, and all the cares are past
That, bandit-like, infest the realms of day—
To what pale country does the spirit stray?
Within what wan-lit land, what region vast,
Does this strange traveller journey far and fast,
Till in the east the day breaks cold and gray?
Ah, tell me, when we slumber, whither goes,
And whence at waking comes, the silent guest,
Whose face no man hath seen, whom no man knows—
The dim familiar of each human breast?
Behold, at length, when day indeed shall close,
Will this uneasy traveller, too, have rest?

ROMEO TO JULIET.

LOVE, touch my mouth with kisses as with fire ;
 Lean hard against my breast, that I may feel
 From thy warm heart its influence subtly steal
Through all my veins ; with overmuch desire
My spirit fainteth, and my lips suspire
 Swiftly with heavy breathings ; round me reel
 The shadows of the dark, and downward wheel
The dim, far stars from heaven ; draw me nigher
Unto thy bosom, love, for all my sense
 Of earth and time fleets from me. . . . Dayward
 flows
The stream of night, and into yon immense
 Blue void the slow moon fails ; hold me more
 close,
Lest from thine arms my spirit hasten hence
 Going that viewless way no mortal knows.

CLEOPATRA TO ANTHONY.

Go from me now ; I will no longer feel
Your burning kisses on my fevered lips ;
You shall not hold one moment e'en the tips
Of my shut fingers, though you cry and kneel.
My face aches, and my tired senses reel ;
Through all my veins a drowsy poison slips ;
My sight grows dim with gradual eclipse,
For slumber on mine eyes has set his seal.
Get hence ; I will no more to-night ; the bars
Of love are placed against you now : go while
I hate you not, my Roman ; the sick stars
Wax faint and pallid in the dawn's red smile,
Look ! I am quenched in sleep, as nenuphars
Are quenched in the broad bosom of the Nile.

A SEA GRAVE.

YEA, rock him gently in thine arms, O Deep !
No nobler heart was ever hushed to rest
Upon the chill, soft pillow of thy breast—
No truer eyes didst thou e'er kiss to sleep.
While o'er his couch the wrathful billows leap,
And mighty winds roar from the darkened west,
Still may his head on thy cool weeds be pressed,
Far down where thou dost endless silence keep.
Oh, when, slow moving through thy spaces dim
Some scaly monster seeks its coral cave,
And pausing o'er the sleeper, stares with grim
Dull eyes a moment downwards through the wave,
Then let thy pale green shadows curtain him,
And swaying sea-flowers hide his lonely grave.

RIZPAH.

BLOWN through the gusty spaces of the night,
The pale clouds fleet like ghosts along the sky ;
A fitful wind goes moaning feebly by,
And the faint moon, poised o'er the craggy height,
Dies in its own uncertain, misty light.

Within the hills the water-springs are dry ;
The herbs are withered ; and the sand-wastes lie
Dim, wide, and lonely to the weary sight.
Behold ! her awful vigil she will keep
Through the wan night as through the burning day ;
Though all the world should sleep she will not sleep,
But watch, wild-eyed and fierce, to scare away,
As round and round, with hoarse, low cries they creep,
From her dead sons the hungry beasts of prey.

MY LOVE IS LIKE THE VASTNESS OF
THE SEA.

My love is like the vastness of the sea,
As deep as life, as high as heaven is high,
And pure as an unclouded summer sky,
And as enduring as eternity.
My love is that which was, and is to be,
Which knows no change, and which can never
die ;
Which all the wealth of Ophir could not buy,
Yet free to *one* as light and air is free.
O Love, thou putt'st to shame the nightingale ;
Thy lips, like bees, are fraught with hydromel ;
Than lilies are thy bosom's more pale ;
Thy words are sweeter than a silver bell :
Yet time from thee thy beauties shall estrange :
But this my Love can never suffer change.

FORESHADOWINGS.

Lo ! in the valley, Love, the galingale
 Bends to the blast beside the river-shore,
 And autumn pipes forever more and more,
While summer's slender voices faint and fail.
Lo ! now the liveried leaf grows sere and pale—
 A phantom of the glory gone before—
 And in the woodland walks we knew of yore
Long since the songster ceased his tuneful tale.
Love, let us love ; life's summer waneth soon ;
 Brief is the splendour of its fervent day :
For every blood-red rose of balmy June
 Hath burst a tender bud of early May.
I unto thee would consecrate a boon ;
 O shall we love, or shall we still delay ?

THE RAILWAY STATION.

THE darkness brings no quiet here, the light
 No waking : ever on my blinded brain
 The flare of lights, the rush, and cry, and strain,
The engine's scream, the hiss and thunder smite :
I see the hurrying crowds, the clasp, the flight,
 Faces that touch, eyes that are dim with pain :
 I see the hoarse wheels turn, and the great train
Move labouring out into the boundless night.

So many souls within its dim recesses,
 So many bright, so many mournful eyes :
Mine eyes that watch grow fixed with dreams and
 guesses ;
 What threads of life, what hidden histories,
What sweet or passionate dreams and dark distresses,
 What unknown thoughts, what various agonies !

A NIGHT OF STORM.

OH city, whom gray stormy hands have sown
With restless drift, scarce broken now of any,
Out of the dark thy windows dim and many
Gleam red across the storm. Sound is there none,
Save evermore the fierce wind's sweep and moan,
From whose gray hands the keen white snow is
shaken
In desperate gusts, that fitfully lull and waken,
Dense as night's darkness round thy towers of stone.

Darkling and strange art thou thus vexed and chidden;
More dark and strange thy veiled agony,
City of storm, in whose gray heart are hidden
What stormier woes, what lives that groan and beat,
Stern and thin-cheeked, against time's heavier sleet,
Rude fates, hard hearts, and prisoning poverty.

OUTLOOK.

NOT to be conquered by these headlong days,
But to stand free : to keep the mind at brood
On life's deep meaning, nature's altitude
Of loveliness, and time's mysterious ways ;
At every thought and deed to clear the haze
Out of our eyes, considering only this,
What man, what life, what love, what beauty is,
This is to live, and win the final praise.

Though strifes, ill fortune, and harsh human need
Beat down the soul, at moments blind and dumb
With agony ; yet, patience—there shall come
Many great voices from life's outer sea,
Hours of strange triumph, and, when few men heed,
Murmurs and glimpses of eternity.

THE HARLEQUIN OF DREAMS.

SWIFT, through some trap mine eyes have never found,
Dim-panelled in the painted scene of sleep,
Thou, giant Harlequin of Dreams, dost leap
Upon my spirit's stage. Then Sight and Sound,
Then Space and Time, then Language, Mete and Bound,
And all familiar Forms that firmly keep
Man's reason in the road, change faces, peep
Betwixt the legs and mock the daily round.
Yet thou canst more than mock : sometimes my tears
At midnight break through bounden lids—a sign
Thou hast a heart : and oft thy little leaven
Of dream-taught wisdom works me bettered years.
In one night witch, saint, trickster, fool divine,
I think thou'rt Jester at the Court of Heaven.

LAUS MARIAE.

ACROSS the brook of Time man leaping goes
On stepping-stones of epochs, that uprise
Fixed, memorable, midst broad shallow flows
Of neutrals, kill-times, sleeps, indifferencies.
So mixt each morn and night rise salient heaps :
Some cross with but a zig-zag, jaded pace
From meal to meal : some with convulsive leaps
Shake the green tussocks of malign disgrace :
And some advance by system and deep art
O'er vantages of wealth, place, learning, tact :
But thou within thyself, dear manifold heart,
Dost bind all epochs in one dainty Fact.
Oh, sweet, my pretty sum of history,
I leapt the breadth of Time in loving thee !

IN ABSENCE.

I.

THE storm that snapped our fate's one ship in twain
Hath blown my half o' the wreck from thine apart.
O Love ! O Love ! across the gray-waved main
To thee-ward strain my eyes, my arms, my heart.
I ask my God if e'en in His sweet place,
Where, by one waving of a wistful wing,
My soul could straightway tremble face to face
With thee, with thee, across the stellar ring—
Yea, where thine absence I could ne'er bewail
Longer than lasts that little blank of bliss
When lips draw back, with recent pressure pale,
To round and redden for another kiss—
Would not my lonesome heart still sigh for thee
What time the drear kiss-intervals must be ?

IN ABSENCE.

II.

So do the mottled formulas of Sense
Glide snakewise through our dreams of Aftertime ;
So errors breed in reeds and grasses dense
That bank our singing rivulets of rhyme.
By Sense rule Space and Time, but in God's land
Their intervals are not, save such as lie
Betwixt successive tones in concords bland
Whose loving distance makes the harmony.
Ah, there shall never come 'twixt me and thee
Gross dissonances of the mile, the year ;
But in the multichords of ecstasy
Our souls shall mingle, yet be featured clear,
And absence wrought to intervals divine,
Shall part, yet link, thy nature's tone in mine.

IN ABSENCE.

III.

LOOK down the shining peaks of all my days
Base-hidden in the valleys of deep night,
So shalt thou see the heights and depths of praise
My love would render unto love's delight ;
For I would make each day an Alp sublime
Of passionate snow, white-hot yet icy clear,
—One crystal of the true-loves of all time
Spiring the world's prismatic atmosphere ;
And I would make each night an awful vale
Deep as thy soul, obscure as modesty,
With every star in heaven trembling pale
O'er sweet profounds where only Love can see.
Oh, runs not thus the lesson thou hast taught ?
When life's all love, 'tis life : aught else, 'tis
naught.

IN ABSENCE.

IV.

LET no man say, *He at his lady's feet*
 Lays worship that to Heaven alone belongs ;
Yea, swings the incense that for God is meet
 In flippant censers of light lover's songs.
Who says it, knows not God, nor love, nor thee ;
 For love is large as is yon heavenly dome :
In love's great blue, each passion is full free
 To fly his favourite flight and build his home.
Did e'er a lark with sky-ward pointing beak
 Stab by mischance a level-flying dove ?
Wife-love flies level, his dear mate to seek :
 God-love darts straight into the skies above.
 Crossing the windage of each other's wings
 But speeds them both upon their journeyings.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

I.

Now at thy soft recalling voice I rise
Where thought is lord o'er Time's complete estate,
Like as a dove from out the gray sedge flies
To tree-tops green where coos his heavenly mate.
From these clear coverts high and cool I see
How every time with every time is knit,
And each to all is mortised cunningly,
And none is sole or whole, yet all are fit.
Thus, if this Age but as a comma show
'Twixt weightier clauses of large-worded years,
My calmer soul scorns not the mark : I know
This crooked point Time's complex sentence clears.
Yet more I learn while, Friend ! I sit by thee ;
Who sees all time, sees all eternity.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

II.

By the more height of thy sweet stature grown,
Twice-eyed with thy gray vision set in mine,
I ken far lands to wifeless men unknown,
I compass stars for one-sexed eyes too fine.
No text on sea-horizons cloudily writ,
No maxim vaguely starred in fields or skies,
But this wise thou-in-me deciphers it :
Oh, thou'rt the Height of heights, the Eye of eyes.
Not hardest fortune's most unbounded stress
Can bind my soul nor hurl it from on high,
Possessing thee, the self of loftiness,
And very light that sight discovers by.
Howe'er thou turn'st, wrong Earth ! still Love's
in sight.
For we are taller than the breadth of night.

THE TAMING OF THE FALCON.

THE bird sits spelled upon the lithe brown wrist
Of yonder turbaned fowler, who hath lamed
No feathered limb, but the winged spirit tamed
With his compelling eye. He need not twist
The silken toil, nor set the thick-limed snare ;
He lures the wanderer with his steadfast gaze,
It shrinks, it quails, it trembles—yet obeys,
And lo ! he has enslaved the thing of air.
The fixed, insistent human will is lord
Of all the earth ;—but in the awful sky,
Reigns absolute, unreached by deed or word,
Above creation, through eternity,
Outshining the sun's shield, the lightning's sword,
The might of Allah's unaverted eye.

SUCCESS.

OFt have I brooded on defeat and pain,
The pathos of the stupid stumbling throng.
These I ignore to-day and only long
To pour my soul forth in one trumpet strain,
One clear, grief-shattering, triumphant song,
For all the victories of man's high endeavour,
Palm-bearing laurelled deeds that live forever,
The splendour clothing him whose will is strong.
Hast thou beheld the deep, glad eyes of one
Who has persisted and achieved? Rejoice!
On naught diviner shines the all-seeing sun.
Salute him with free heart and choral voice,
'Midst flippant, feeble crowds of spectres wan,
The bold, significant, successful man.

VENUS OF THE LOUVRE.

DOWN the long hall she glistens like a star,
The foam-born mother of Love, transfixed to stone,
Yet none the less immortal, breathing on.
Time's brutal hand hath maimed but could not mar.
When first the enthralled enchantress from afar
Dazzled mine eyes, I saw not her alone,
Serenely poised on her world-worshipped throne
As when she guided once her dove-drawn car,—
But at her feet a pale, death-stricken Jew,
Her life adorer, sobbed farewell to love.
Here Heine wept ! Here still he weeps anew,
Nor ever shall his shadow lift or move,
While mourns one ardent heart, one poet brain,
For vanished Hellas and Hebraic pain.

THE SYMPHONY OF LIFE.

FLOATING upon a swelling wave of sound,
We seemed to overlook an endless sea :
Poised 'twixt clear heavens and glittering surf
were we.

We drank the air in flight : we knew no bound
To the audacious ventures of desire.

Nigh us the sun was dropping, drowned in gold ;
Deep, deep below the burning billows rolled ;
And all the sea sang like a smitten lyre.

Oh, the wild voices of those chanting waves !

The human faces glimpsed beneath the tide !
Familiar eyes gazed from profound sea-caves,

And we, exalted, were as we had died.
We knew the sea was Life, the harmonious cry
The blended discords of Humanity.

THE BIRTH OF LOVE.

I.

LOOK deeper yet: mark 'midst the wave-blurred
mass,

In lines distinct, in colours clear defined,

The typic groups and figures of mankind.

Behold within the cool and liquid glass

Bright child-folk sporting with smooth yellow shells,

Astride of dolphins, leaping up to kiss

Fair mother-faces. From the vast abyss

How joyously their thought-free laughter wells!

Some slumber in grim caverns unafraid,

Lulled by the overwhelming water's sound,

And some make mouths at dragons, undismayed.

Oh dauntless innocence! The gulfs profound

Re-echo strangely with their ringing glee,

And with wise mermaids' plaintive melody.

THE BIRTH OF LOVE.

II.

WHAT do the sea-nymphs in that coral cave?
With wondering eyes their supple forms they bend
O'er something rarely beautiful. They lend
Their lithe white arms, and through the golden wave
They lift it tenderly. Oh blinding sight !
A naked, radiant goddess, tranced in sleep,
Full-limbed, voluptuous, 'neath the mantling sweep
Of auburn locks that kiss her ankles white !
Upward they bear her, chanting low and sweet ;
The clinging waters part before their way,
Jewels of flame are dancing 'neath their feet :
Up in the sunshine, on soft foam, they lay
Their precious burden, and return forlorn.
Oh, bliss ! Oh, anguish ! Mortals, *Love* is born !

LOVE'S PROTAGONIST.

HARK ! from unfathomable deeps a dirge
 Swells sobbing through the melancholy air :
 Where Love has entered, Death is also there.
The wail outrings the chafed, tumultuous surge ;
Ocean and earth, the illimitable skies,
 Prolong one note of mourning for the dead,
 The cry of souls not to be comforted.
What piercing music ! Funereal visions rise
And send the hot tears raining down our cheek.
 We see the silent grave upon the hill
 With its lone lilac-bush. O heart, be still !
She will not rise, she will not stir nor speak.
Surely, the unreturning dead are blest.
Ring on, sweet dirge, and knell us to our rest !

PHANTASY.

UPON the silver beach the undines dance
With interlinking arms and flying hair ;
Like polished marble gleam their limbs left bare ;
Upon their virgin rites pale moonbeams glance.
Softer the music ! for their foam-bright feet
Print not the moist floor where they trip their round :
Affrighted they will scatter at a sound,
Leap in their cool sea-chambers, nimbly fleet,
And we shall doubt that we have ever seen,
While our same eyes behold stray wreaths of mist,
Shot with faint colours by the moon-rays kissed,
Floating snow-soft, snow-white, where these had been—
Already, look ! the wave-washed sands are bare,
And mocking laughter ripples through the air !

AUTUMN.

THOU comest, Autumn, heralded by the rain,
With banners, by great gales incessant fanned,
Brighter than brightest silks of Samarcand,
And stately oxen harnessed to thy wain !
Thou standest, like imperial Charlemagne,
Upon thy bridge of gold ; thy royal hand
Outstretched with benedictions o'er the land,
Blessing the farms through all thy vast domain !
Thy shield is the red harvest moon, suspended
So long beneath the heaven's o'erhanging eaves ;
Thy steps are by the farmer's prayers attended ;
Like flames upon an altar shine the sheaves ;
And following thee, in thy ovation splendid,
Thine Almoner, the wind, scatters thy golden leaves !

THE TIDES.

I SAW the long line of the vacant shore,
The sea-weed and the shells upon the sand,
And the brown rocks left bare on every hand
As if the ebbing tide would flow no more.
Then heard I, more distinctly than before,
The ocean breathe and its great breast expand,
And hurrying came on the defenceless land
The insurgent waters with tumultuous roar.
All thought and feeling and desire, I said,
Love, laughter, and the exultant joy of song,
Have ebbbed from me for ever ! Suddenly o'er me
They swept again from their deep ocean bed,
And in a tumult of delight, and strong
As youth, and beautiful as youth, upbore me !

THE GALAXY.

TORRENT of light and river of the air,
Along whose bed the glimmering stars are seen
Like gold and silver sands in some ravine
Where mountain streams have left their channels
bare !

The Spaniard sees in thee the pathway, where
His patron saint descended in the sheen
Of his celestial armour, on serene
And quiet nights, when all the heavens were fair.
Not this I see, nor yet the ancient fable
Of Phaeton's wild course, that scorched the skies
Wherever the hoofs of his hot coursers trod ;
But the white drift of worlds o'er chasms of sable,
The star-dust, that is whirled aloft and flies
From the invisible chariot-wheels of God.

MILTON.

I PACE the sounding sea-beach and behold
How the voluminous billows roll and run,
Upheaving and subsiding, while the sun
Shines through their sheeted emerald far unrolled,
And the ninth wave, slow gathering fold by fold
All its loose-flowing garments into one,
Plunges upon the shore, and floods the dun
Pale reach of sands, and changes them to gold.
So in majestic cadence rise and fall
The mighty undulations of thy song,
O sightless bard, England's Maeonides,
And ever and anon, high over all
Uplifted a ninth wave, superb and strong,
Floods all the soul with its melodious seas.

DANTE.

TUSCAN, that wanderest through the realms of gloom,
With thoughtful pace, and sad, majestic eyes,
Stern thoughts and awful from thy thoughts arise,
Like Farinata from his fiery tomb.
Thy sacred song is like the trump of doom ;
Yet in thy heart what human sympathies,
What soft compassion glows, as in the skies
The tender stars their clouded lamps relume !
Methinks I see thee stand, with pallid cheeks,
By Fra Hilario in his diocese,
As up the convent-walls, in golden streaks,
The ascending sunbeams mark the day's decrease,
And, as he asks what there the stranger seeks,
Thy voice along the cloister whispers, " Peace !"

THE BROKEN OAR.

ONCE upon Iceland's solitary strand
A poet wandered with his book and pen,
Seeking some final word, some sweet Amen,
Wherewith to close the volume in his hand.
The billows rolled and plunged upon the sand,
The circling sea-gulls swept beyond his ken,
And from the parting cloud-rack now and then
Flashed the red sunset over sea and land.
Then by the billows at his feet was tossed
A broken oar; and carved thereon he read,
"Oft was I weary, when I toiled at thee;"
And like a man, who findeth what was lost,
He wrote the words, then lifted up his head,
And flung his useless pen into the sea.

CHIMES.

SWEET chimes ! that in the loneliness of night
Salute the passing hour, and in the dark
And silent chambers of the household mark
The movements of the myriad orbs of light
Through my close eyelids, by the inner sight,
I see the constellations in the arc
Of their great circles moving on, and hark !
I almost hear them singing in their flight.
Better than sleep it is to lie awake
O'ercanopied by the vast starry dome
Of the immeasurable sky ; to feel
The slumbering world sink under us, and make
Hardly an eddy,—a mere rush of foam
On the great sea beneath a sinking keel.

HOLIDAYS.

THE holiest of all holidays are those
Kept by ourselves in silence and apart ;
The secret anniversaries of the heart,
When the full river of feeling overflows ;—
The happy days unclouded to their close ;
The sudden joys that out of darkness start
As flames from ashes ; swift desires that dart
Like swallows singing down each wind that blows.
White as the gleam of a receding sail,
White as a cloud that floats and fades in air,
White as the whitest lily on the stream,
These tender memories are ;—a Fairy Tale
Of some enchanted land we know not where,
But lovely as a landscape in a dream.

THE TWO RIVERS.

SLOWLY the hour-hand of the clock moves round ;
So slowly that no human eye hath power
To see it move ! Slowly in shine or shower
The painted ship above it, homeward bound,
Sails, but seems motionless, as if aground ;
Yet both arrive at last ; and in his tower
The slumbrous watchman wakes and strikes the hour,
A mellow, measured, melancholy sound.
Midnight ! the outpost of advancing day !
The frontier town and citadel of night !
The watershed of Time, from which the streams
Of Yesterday and To-morrow take their way,
One to the land of promise and of light,
One to the land of darkness and of dreams.

VENICE.

WHITE swan of cities, slumbering in thy nest
So wonderfully built among the reeds
Of the lagoon, that fences thee and feeds,
As sayeth thy old historian and thy guest !
White water-lily, cradled and caressed
By ocean streams, and from the silt and weeds
Lifting thy golden filaments and seeds,
Thy sun-illumined spires, thy crown and crest !
White phantom city, whose untrodden streets
Are rivers, and whose pavements are the shifting
Shadows of palaces and strips of sky ;
I wait to see thee vanish like the fleets
Seen in a mirage, or towers of cloud uplifting
In air their unsubstantial masonry.

THE SOUND OF THE SEA.

THE sea awoke at midnight from its sleep,
And round the pebbly beaches far and wide
I heard the first wave of the rising tide
Rush onward with uninterrupted sweep ;
A voice out of the silence of the deep,
A sound mysteriously multiplied
As of a cataract from the mountain's side,
Or roar of winds upon a wooded steep.
So comes to us at times, from the unknown
And inaccessible solitudes of being,
The rushing of the sea-tides of the soul :
And inspirations that we deem our own,
Are some divine foreshadowing and foreseeing
Of things beyond our reason or control.

NATURE.

As a fond mother when the day is o'er
Leads by the hand her little child to bed,
Half willing, half reluctant to be led,
And leave his broken playthings on the floor,
Still gazing at them through the open door,
Nor wholly reassured and comforted
By promises of others in their stead
Which, though more splendid, may not please
him more.

So Nature deals with us and takes away
Our playthings one by one, and by the hand
Leads us to rest so gently, that we go,
Scarce knowing if we wished to go or stay,
Being too full of sleep to understand
How far the unknown transcends the what we
know.

LOVE.

OUR love is not a fading earthly flower :
Its wingèd seed dropped down from Paradise,
And, nursed by day and night, by sun and shower,
Doth momentarily to fresher beauty rise.
To us the leafless autumn is not bare,
Nor winter's rattling boughs lack lusty green :
Our summer hearts make summer's fulness where
No leaf or bud or blossom may be seen :
For nature's life in love's deep life doth lie,
Love,—whose forgetfulness is beauty's death,
Whose mystic key these cells of Thou and I
Into the infinite freedom openeth,
And makes the body's dark and narrow grate
The wide-flung leaves of Heaven's palace-gate.

LOVE AND SORROW.

I THOUGHT our love at full, but I did err ;
Joy's wreath drooped o'er mine eyes ; I could not see
That sorrow in our happy world must be
Love's deepest spokesman and interpreter.
But, as a mother feels her child first stir
Under her heart, so felt I instantly
Deep in my soul another bond to thee
Thrill with that life we saw depart from her.
O mother of our angel-child ! twice dear !
Death knits as well as parts, and still, I wis,
Her tender radiance shall enfold us here ;
Even as the light borne up by inward bliss
Threads the void glooms of space without a fear,
To print on farthest stars her pitying kiss.

THE STREET.

THEY pass me by like shadows, crowds on crowds,
Dim ghosts of men that hover to and fro,
Hugging their bodies round them, like thin shrouds
Wherein their souls were buried long ago :
They trampled on their youth, and faith, and love,
They cast their hope of human-kind away,
With Heaven's clear messages they madly strove,
And conquered,—and their spirits turned to clay.
Lo ! how they wander round the world, their grave,
Whose ever-gaping maw by such is fed,
Gibbering at living men, and idly rave,
“ We, only, truly live, but ye are dead.”
Alas ! poor fools, the anointed eye may trace
A dead soul's epitaph in every face !

JEFFRIES WYMAN.

Died September 4, 1874.

THE wisest man could ask no more of Fate
Than to be simple, modest, manly, true,
Safe from the Many, honoured by the Few ;
To count as naught in World, or Church, or State,
But inwardly in secret to be great ;
To feel mysterious Nature ever new ;
To touch, if not to grasp, her endless clue,
And learn by each discovery how to wait.
He widened knowledge and escaped the praise ;
He wisely taught, because more wise to learn ;
He toiled for science, not to draw men's gaze,
But for her lore of self-denial stern.
That such a man could spring from our decay
Fans the soul's nobler faith until it burn.

TO A FRIEND,

*Who gave me a group of weeds and grasses, after a
drawing of Dürer.*

TRUE as the sun's own work, but more refined,
It tells of love behind the artist's eye,
Of sweet companionships with earth and sky,
And summers stored, the sunshine of the mind.
What peace ! Sure, ere you breathe, the fickle wind
Will break its truce and bend that grass-plume high,
Scarcely yet quiet from the gilded fly
That flits a more luxurious perch to find.
Thanks for a pleasure that can never pall,
A serene moment, deftly caught and kept
To make immortal summer on my wall.
Had he who drew such gladness ever wept ?
Ask rather could he else have seen at all,
Or grown in Nature's mysteries an adept ?

TO MISS D. T.

On her giving me a drawing of little street arabs.

As, cleansed of Tiber's and Oblivion's slime,
Glow Farnesina's vaults with shapes again
That dreamed some exiled artist from his pain
Back to his Athens and the Muse's clime,
So these world-orphaned waifs of Want and Crime,
Purged by Art's absolution from the stain
Of the polluting city-flood, regain
Ideal grace secure from taint of time.
An Attic frieze you give, a pictured song;
For as with words the poet paints, for you
The happy pencil at its labour sings,
Stealing his privilege, nor does him wrong,
Beneath the false discovering the true,
And Beauty's best in unregarded things.

THE LAKE AND STAR.

THE mountain lake, o'ershadowed by the hills,
May still gaze heavenward on the evening star
Whose distant light its dark recesses fills,
Though boundless distance must divide them far ;
Still may the lake the star's bright image bear,—
Still may the star from its blue ether dome
Shower down its silver beams across the gloom,
And light the wave that wanders darkly there.
Star of my life ! thus do I turn to thee
Amid the shadows that above me roll ;
Thus from thy distant sphere thou shin'st on me,
Thus does thine image float upon my soul,
Through the wide space that must our lives dis sever
Far as the lake and star, ah me, for ever !

VITA NUOVA.

THOUGH I recall no word, no glance, no tone,
Whereon my eager memory might repose,
Yet, like the earth where grew the Persian rose,
I feel a higher life inspire my own ;—
And since that higher life I have been near,
Some aura, some mysterious effluence,
Transcending all the scope of thought or sense,
Surrounds me like a rarer atmosphere.
And dwelling now in this new element,
The world of daily life exalted seems ;
I walk therein as in the realm of dreams,
Following the thought that leads me on intent,
As if a stream that wandered aimlessly
Had heard at last the murmur of the sea.

LOVE.

Go forth in life, oh, friend ! not seeking love,
A mendicant that with imploring eye
And outstretched hand asks of the passers-by
The alms his strong necessities may move.
For such poor love, to pity near allied,
Thy generous spirit may not stoop and wait,
A suppliant whose prayer may be denied
Like a spurned beggar's at a palace-gate :
But thy heart's affluence lavish uncontrolled—
The largess of thy love give full and free,
As monarchs in their progress scatter gold ;
And be thy heart like the exhaustless sea,
That must its wealth of cloud and dew bestow,
Through tributary streams or ebb or flow.

A REMEMBRANCE.

NIGHT closes round me, and wild threatening forms
Clasp me with icy arms and chain me down,
And bind upon my brow a cypress crown
Dewy with tears, and Heaven frowns dark with storms :
But the one glorious memory of thee
Rises upon my path to guide and bless,
The bright Shekinah of the Wilderness—
The polar star upon a trackless sea.
The beaming Pharos of the unreached shore—
It spans the clouds that gather o'er my way,
The rainbow of my life's tempestuous day.
Oh, blessed thought ! stay with me evermore,
And shed thy lustrous beams where midnight glooms,
As fragrant lamps burned in the ancient tombs.

AFTER READING SHAKESPEARE.

BLITHE Fancy lightly builds with airy hands
Or on the edges of the darkness peers
Breathless and frightened at the Voice she hears :
Imagination (lo ! the sky expands)
Travels the blue arch and Cimmerian sands,—
Homeless on earth, the pilgrim of the spheres,
The rush of light before the hurrying years,
The Voice that cries in unfamiliar lands.

Men weigh the moons that flood with eerie light
The dusky vales of Saturn—wood and stream—
But who shall follow on the awful sweep
Of Neptune through the dim and dreadful deep?
Onward he wanders in the unknown night,
And we are shadows moving in a dream.

IMMORTALITY.

An Aspiration.

AND will the spirit falter and its fire
Burn low and slow, and die, when we grow old ?
The brain be silent, and the heart be cold,
And love be old and cold, and all desire

Be quenched, that now higher and higher,
Immortal fire, through dungeon keep and hold,
Turret and spire of this proud life, is rolled—
Shall this grow old and cold and then expire ?

Oh let the dream live on, the mortal die,—
The vision thrive, the costly form decay,—
The beauty old and cold all pass away,
The spirit higher and higher, in fire uprolled,
Wrap tower and spire and battlement on high
And earth and sky, so that it ne'er grow old !

THE SOUL.

WHENCE are these motions of the human soul?
Itself outside itself wanders and soars,
Alighting now from old Diluvian shores,
Or where the many-moonèd planets roll,

Or the fixed stars gaze round the icy pole,—
A moment on the threshold of itself
To stand, then hide, an unsubstantial elf,
Or, eyeless, burrow downward like a mole.

But all the while, as a still sentinel
Upon a lonely hill, it marks the track
Itself hath made, and hath the potent spell
Its absent self at will to summon back :—

So several it is, and yet so one,
Such diverse moods that move in unison !

THE DEATH OF LOVE.

LOVE doth not stir my heart ; sweet love is dead,
Its cheek is pale, its lovely eyelids closed ;
No, not a quiver shakes the lowly bed
Where the dear ashen image lies reposed.

I can go nigh and lift the mournful veil,
I can look down and touch the chiselled lips,—
Remember that they were not always pale,
But red—ah, rosy-red—with smiles and quips.

I can do this, then pass with but a tear,
That tear soon taught to decorate a smile,
Mayhap adorn a verse to please an ear
That love's sweet music yet will help beguile.

Ah God ! so dead to Love, and yet not dead !
Would I were with her on her lowly bed !

AN AUGUST NOON.

HIGH summer Noon ! Yon crow of all his kind
Stands indefatigably impudent—
A vigilant scout upon a battlement
Of his vast fortress. Underneath him wind

The water-courses—open, unconfined
To his down-peering eye. Improvident
The bare fields lie in swart abandonment ;
The hills their tresses thoughtlessly unbind

Of fluent silver, carelessly displayed ;
And all the pastures in their morn attire
Of flowery robes most gorgeously arrayed
Shrink now too late before the noonday's fire.

Thus unthrift Earth her dainty bosom bares,
And on her nakedness heaven's bold eye stares.

BEAUTY EVANESCENT.

BESIDE her I could be a thousand years
And talk with her, and muse, and think I caught
Her very spirit, and yet catch it not ;
So subtle is it : Two translucent spheres

Should flash it forth ; it flames, then disappears.
A mouth all music should translate it well ;
It flows like music—whither none can tell ;
It wraps all senses round, soothes, charms, and
 cheers.

And when we feel, peer, listen, would confine
And grasp its very self, it slips away,
Like the elusive beauty of a day
In autumn, leaving of its track no sign.

And yet the search we every day renew,
Pleased to be foiled, yet foiled, still to pursue.

LOVE'S EMPTY HOUSE.

O THOU long-silent, solitary house,
Where Love once came and went with joyous cries,
Or lingered long, sighing as Summer sighs
When Autumn's breath begins her fear to rouse
With fierce caress that shall make bare her boughs,
Her tender boughs, and all her beauty's prize
Deliver, faded, to the winds that rise
And rend her crown from her dishonoured brows—

O solitary house, thine open door
Again shall welcome sweet Love's wingèd tread,
His eyes shall light thee, as they lit of yore,
In days when Love and Joy were newly wed;
He shall return, with myrtle round his head,
And fill thy halls with music as before.

A CRY.

O WANDERER in unknown lands, what cheer?
How dost thou fare on thy mysterious way?
What strange light breaks upon thy distant day,
Yet leaves me lonely in the darkness here?
O bide no longer in that far-off sphere,
Though all Heaven's cohorts should thy footsteps
 stay.
Break through their splendid, militant array,
And answer to my call, O dead and dear!
I shall not fear thee, howsoe'er thou come.
Thy coldness will not chill, though Death is cold—
A touch and I shall know thee, or a breath;
Speak the old, well-known language, or be dumb;
Only come back! Be near me as of old,
So thou and I shall triumph over Death!

THE LAST GOOD-BYE.

How shall we know it is the last good-bye?

The skies will not be darkened in that hour,

No sudden blight will fall on leaf or flower,

No single bird will hush its careless cry,

And you will hold my hands, and smile or sigh

Just as before. Perchance the sudden tears

In your dear eyes will answer to my fears ;

But there will come no voice of prophecy :

No voice to whisper, " Now, and not again,

Space for last words, last kisses, and last prayer,

For all the wild, unmitigated pain

Of those who, parting, clasp hands with despair."

" Who knows?" we say, but doubt and fear
remain,

Would any *choose* to part thus unaware?

A SILENT GUEST.

WE sit and chat in the familiar place,—
We two, where in those other years were three,—
Till, suddenly, you turn your eyes from me,
And in the empty air I see a face,
Serenely smiling with the old-time grace,
And we are three again. All silently
The third guest entered ; and as silent we,
Held mute by very awe for some brief space.

And then we question, Has he come to stay ?
Was heaven lonely to the child of earth ?
Was there no nectar in immortal bliss
To warm lips thirsting for a mortal kiss ?
Has the new lesson taught the old love's worth ?
The still ghost hears, and smiles, and—goes his way.

AFTER DEATH.

And very sweet it is
To know he still is warm, though I am cold.

—Christina Rossetti.

I WOULD not have *thee* warm when I am cold ;
But both together,—'neath some sylvan mound,
Amid the pleasant secrets under ground,
Where green things flourish in the embracing mould,
And jealous seeds the souls of blossoms hold—
In some sweet fellowship of silence bound,
Deeper than life, more exquisite than sound,
Rest tranquilly while Love's new tales are told.

We will not grudge the waking world its bliss—
Its joy of speech, its gladness of surprise,
When lovers clasp each other's hands and kiss,
And earth puts on new glory to their eyes :
We, lying there, with Death's deep knowledge wise,
Will know that we have found Life's best in this.

BEYOND SIGHT AND SOUND.

FULL soon I shall be gone, where dead men go—
Gone on, beyond your ken, far out of sight,
To that dim, phantom world that no stars light,
Where souls like pallid flames flit to and fro,
Where Love is not, nor memory of Woe,
And no voice pleads through that eternal night :
Dumb are those souls, and dead is their delight,
They need no courage, since no fear they know.

If a sad ghost should seem to bar your way,
Think not from that vague world that I return
'Twill be but moonlight silvering some spray—
I shall not hear you, howsoe'er you yearn :
Yet if your cry *could* follow my far track,
I think from bane or bliss I should come back.

A PARABLE.

I LONGED for rest, and some one spoke me fair,
And proffered goodly rooms wherein to dwell,
Hung round with tapestries, and garnished well,
That I might take mine ease and pleasure there ;
And there I sought a refuge from despair,
A joy that should my life's long gloom dispel ;
But ominously through those fair halls there fell
Strange sounds, as of old music in the air.

As day went down, the music grew apace,
And in the moonlight saw I, white and cold,
A presence, radiant in the radiant space,
With smiling lips that never had grown old,
And then I knew the secret none had told,
And shivered there, an alien in that place.

IN THE COURT OF THE LIONS
BY MOONLIGHT.

THESE lions were sculptured centuries ago
In that fair court a Sultan made for her
Who was his heart's delight. Her worshippe
Was he whom all men worshipped ; proving so
His love and homage that the ages know
How fair she was, and how at softest stir
Of her soft robes—as these proud courts aver—
His kingly heart with kingly love did glow ;

Till he bade crafty workmen come and make
A palace, lovely for her lovely sake,
Thick-set with gems and many a sculptured space
Wrought cunningly out of the creamy stone
To frame the dusky beauty of her face—
Still on those courts the white moon shines, but *they*
are gone.

ORPHEUS.

EACH Orpheus must unto the depths descend,—
For only thus the poet can be wise ;
Must make the sad Persephone his friend,
And buried love to second life arise ;
Again his love must lose through too much love,
Must lose his life by living life too true,
For what he sought below is passed above,
Already done is all that he would do ;
Must tune all being with his single lyre,
Must melt all rocks free from their primal pain,
Must search all Nature with his one soul's fire,
Must bind anew all forms in heavenly chain.
If he already sees what he must do,
Well may he shade his eyes from the far-shining view.

SLEEP.

O SLEEP, good mother of enchanting dreams,
Within thy soothing arms oh let me lie,
What time the night-wind sings a lullaby,
And the moon kisses down with cooling gleams,
Mine eyelids weary of day's sultry beams ;
Then let thy rarest visions come anigh,
Dead hopes fulfilled in perfect radiancy,
Whose fairness all my waking pain redeems ;
With Loline let me stray through jasmine bowers,
A balmy world of love whose stars are flowers,
Where zephyrs sigh in such a tender way
They seem to breathe the words we long to say ;
And when these dreams have come, good Sleep, ah
then
I pray thee do not let me wake again.

NIGHT.

AM I not all alone?—The world is still
In passionless slumber,—not a tree but feels
The far-pervading hush, and softer steals
The misty river by. Yon broad bare hill
Looks coldly up to heaven, and all the stars
Seem eyes deep fixed in silence, as if bound
By some unearthly spell,—no other sound
But the owl's unfrequent moan.—Their airy cars
The winds have stationed on the mountain peaks.
Am I not all alone?—A spirit speaks
From the abyss of night, “Not all alone :
Nature is round thee with her banded powers,
And ancient genius haunts thee in these hours,
Mind and its kingdom now are all thine own.”

RETURN.

HERE on the steps I sit as long ago.

Some little change there seems: the vine its leaves

O'erhead flings broader, thicker darkness weaves,

And heavier branches sweep the path below ;

While from its fragrant shade I watch the slow

Long shadows of the elms creep o'er the grass,

And hear the tinkling cow-bells as they pass,

Like one who dreams, but neither joys nor grieves.

And still the same, but yet the same no more

As when a girl I looked out through the years.

Some hopes I see fulfilled, and ah ! some fears,

Since last I sat in this familiar door.

I would not be a girl again, and yet

With sudden tears my folded hands are wet.

TO ONE DESPONDENT.

SOMETIMES you doubt my love, and sad tears rise
To eyes like shady pools, grown dark and clear
With wistful questioning if I hold you dear,
And thus my answering smile to you replies.
We breathe to live,—yet 'neath these summer skies,
Though we scarce feel our breathing, do not fear
That life has ceased, or long for winter drear
To show each snowy breath that heavenward flies.

And though I laugh while others sing your praise,
If the world scorn and hold you in despite,
Then shall you more rejoice than you have grieved,
Seeing love greater far than you believed ;
As first we see the eternal stars' bright rays
When creeps the dark imponderable night.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

STERN be the pilot in the dreadful hour
When a great nation, like a ship at sea
With the wroth breakers whitening at her lee,
Feels her last shudder if her Helmsman cower ;
A godlike manhood be his mighty dower !
Such and so gifted, Lincoln, may'st thou be,
With thy high wisdom's low simplicity
And awful tenderness of voted power.
From our hot records then thy name shall stand
On Time's calm ledger out of passionate days—
With the pure debt of gratitude begun,
And only paid in never-ending praise—
One of the many of a mighty Land,
Made by God's providence the Anointed One.

SILENCE.

THERE are some qualities—some incorporate things,
That have a double life, which thus is made
A type of that twin entity which springs
From matter and light, evinced in solid and shade.
There is a two-fold *Silence*—sea and shore—
Body and soul. One dwells in lonely places,
Newly with grass o'ergrown ; some solemn graces,
Some human memories and tearful lore,
Render him terrorless : his name's "No More."
He is the corporate Silence : dread him not !
No power hath he of evil in himself ;
But should some urgent fate (untimely lot !)
Bring thee to meet his shadow (nameless elf,
That haunteth the low regions where hath trod
No foot of man), commend thyself to God !

TO SCIENCE.

SCIENCE ! true daughter of Old Time thou art !

Who alterest all things with thy peering eyes.

Why preyest thou thus upon the poet's heart,

Vulture whose wings are dull realities ?

How should he love thee ? or how deem thee wise,

Who would'st not leave him in his wandering

To seek for treasure in the jewelled skies,

Albeit he soared with an undaunted wing ?

Hast thou not dragged Diana from her car ?

And driven the Hamadryad from the wood

To seek a shelter in some happier star ?

Hast thou not torn the Naiad from her flood,

The Elfin from the green grass, and from me

The summer dream beneath the Tamarind tree ?

TO ZANTE.

FAIR isle, that from the fairest of all flowers,
Thy gentlest of all gentle names dost take !
How many memories of what radiant hours
At sight of thee and thine at once awake !
How many scenes of what departed bliss !
How many thoughts of what entombed hopes !
How many visions of a maiden that is
No more—no more upon thy verdant slopes !
No more! alas, that magical, sad sound
Transforming all ! thy charms shall please *no*
more—
Thy memory *no more!* Accursed ground
Henceforth I hold thy flower-enamelled shore,
O hyacinthine isle ! O purple Zante !
“ Isola d’oro ! Fior di Levante ! ”

KEATS'S GREEK URN.

WHEN the young poet wrought so unaware
From purest Parian, washed by Grecian seas,
And stained to amber softness by the breeze
Of Attic shores, his Urn, antequely fair—
And brimmed it at the sacred fountain, where
The draughts he drew were sweet as Castaly's—
Had he foreseen what souls would there appease
Their purer thirsts, he had not known despair !

About it long processions move and wind,
Held by its grace,—a chalice choicely fit
For truth's and beauty's perfect interfuse,
Whose effluence the exhaling years shall find
Unwasted : for the poet's name is writ
(Firmer than marble) in Olympian dew !

FLOOD-TIDE.

(To the Poet.)

To every artist, howsoe'er his thought
Unfolds itself before the eyes of men,—
Whether through sculptor's chisel, poet's pen,
Or painter's wondrous brush,—there comes, full
fraught

With instant revelation, lightning-wrought,
A moment of supremest heart-swell, when
The mind leaps to the tidal crest, and then
Sweeps on triumphant to the harbour sought.

Wait, eager spirit, till the topping waves
Shall roll their gathering strength in one, and lift
From out the swamping trough thy galleon free ;
Mount with the whirl, command the rush that raves
A maelstrom round ; then proudly shoreward drift,
Rich-freighted as an Indian argosy !

TELL ME SOME WAY.

OH, you who love me not, tell me some way
Whereby I may forget you for a space ;
Nay, clean forget you and your lovely face—
Yet well I know how vain this prayer I pray.
All weathers hold you. Can I make the May
Forbid her boughs blow white in every place?
Or rob June of her rose that comes apace?
Cheat of their charm the elder months and gray?
Aye, were you dead, you could not be forgot ;
So sparse the bloom along the lanes would be ;
Such sweetness out the briery hedges fled ;
My tears would fall that you had loved me not ;
And bitterer tears that you had gone from me ;
Living you break my heart, so would you dead !

SURRENDER.

TAKE all of me,—I am thine own, heart, soul,
Brain, body—all; all that I am or dream
Is thine for ever; yea, though space should teem
With thy conditions, I'd fulfil the whole—
Were to fulfil them to be loved of thee.
Oh, love me!—were to love me but a way
To kill me—love me; so to die would be
To live for ever. Let me hear thee say
Once only, "Dear, I love thee"—then all life
Would be one sweet remembrance,—thou its king:
Nay, thou art that already, and the strife
Of twenty worlds could not uncrown thee. Bring,
O Time! my monarch to possess his throne,
Which is my heart and for himself alone.

ABANDONMENT.

SOMETIMES when walls seem enemies, and sleep
Given to others like a cruel jest
Sent for my mocking, I, being mad for rest,
Creep out all lonely past the huddled sheep,—
Stirring with drowsy tang of bells that keep
Soft iterance through the whispery night, where nest
And nestling sway, by winnowing wind caressed,—
There fling myself along the grass to weep,
Sobs gathering, hands gripped hard into the earth,—
The blessed earth that takes us back at last !—
And think, “Ah, could this knowledge now befall
Some woman who for long hath thought me worth
Only her hatred, she would hold me fast
And strive to comfort me, forgetting all.”

THE POTATO HARVEST.

A HIGH bare field, brown from the plough, and borne
Aslant from sunset ; amber wastes of sky
Washing the ridge ; a clamour of crows that fly
In from the wide flats where the spent tides mourn
To yon their rocking roosts in pines wind-torn ;
A line of gray snake-fence, that zigzags by .
A pond, and cattle ; from the homestead nigh
The long deep summonings of the supper horn.

Black on the ridge, against that lonely flush,
A cart, and stoop-necked oxen ; ranged beside,
Some barrels ; and the day-worn harvest folk,
Here emptying their baskets, jar the hush
With hollow thunders ; down the dusk hillside
Lumbers the wain ; and day fades out like smoke.

THE SOWER.

A BROWN sad-coloured hillside, where the soil,
Fresh from the frequent harrow, deep and fine,
Lies bare ; no break in the remote sky-line,
Save where a flock of pigeons streams aloft,
Startled from feed in some low-lying croft,
Or far-off spires with yellow of sunset shine ;
And here the Sower, unwittingly divine,
Exerts the silent forethought of his toil.

Alone he treads the glebe, his measured stride
Dumb in the yielding soil ; and tho' small joy
Dwell in his heavy face, as spreads the blind
Pale grain from his dispensing palm aside,
This plodding churl grows great in his employ ;—
Godlike, he makes provision for mankind.

TIDES.

THROUGH the still dusk how sighs the ebb-tide out
Reluctant for the reed-beds ! Down the sands
It washes. Hark ! Beyond the wan gray strand's
Low limits how the winding channels grieve,
Aware the evasive waters soon will leave
Them void amid the waste of desolate lands,
Where shadowless to the sky the marsh expands,
And the noon-heats must scar them, and the drought.

Yet soon for them the solacing tide returns
To quench their thirst of longing. Ah, not so
Works the stern law our tides of life obey !
Ebbing in the night-watches swift away,
Scarce known ere fled for ever is the flow ;
And in parched channel still the shrunk stream mourns.

A CALM.

OH for one draught of cooling northern air !
That it might pour its freshness on me now ;
That it might kiss my cheek and cleave my hair,
And part its currents round my fevered brow !
Ocean, and sky, and earth ! a blistering calm
Spread over all ! how weary wears the day !
Oh lift the wave, and bend the distant palm,
Breeze ! wheresoe'er thy lagging pinions stray,—
Triumphant burst upon the level deep,
Rock the fixed hull, and swell the clinging sail !
Arouse the opal clouds that o'er us sleep,
Sound thy shrill whistle ! we will bid thee hail !
Though wrapped in all the storm-clouds of the north,
Yet from thy home of ice, come forth, O breeze, come forth !

IMEROS.

My heart a haunted manor is, where Time
Has fumbled noiselessly with mouldering hands :
At sunset ghosts troop out in sudden bands,
At noon 'tis vacant as a house of crime ;

But when, unseen as sound, the night-winds climb
The higher keys with their unstilled demands,
It wakes to memories of other lands,
And thrills with echoes of enchanted rhyme.

Then, through the dreams and hopes of earlier years,
A fall of phantom footsteps on the stair
Approaches near, and ever nearer yet,
A voice rings through my life's deserted ways :
I turn to greet thee, Love. The empty air
Holds but the spectre of my own regret.

LOVE CROWNED.

A MAIDEN, with a garland on her head,
Sat in her bower between two lovers : one
Wore such a wreath as hers ; the other none.
But him, in merry wise, she garlanded
With that she wore ; then, gaily, took instead
The other's wreath and wore it as her own ;
Whereat both smiled, each deeming she had shown
Himself the favourite. Though she nothing said
Concerning this by any spoken word,
Yet by her act, methinks, the maid preferred
The lover she discrowned. A friendly thing
Or whimsical—no more—the gift she gave,
(A queen might do as much by any slave),
But he whose crown she wore was her heart's king.

“WITH MY BODY I THEE WORSHIP.”

THAT I adore thee, my most gracious queen,
More in my spirit than my body's sense
Of thine, were such incredible pretence
As I would scorn to utter. Thou hast seen
When eyes and lips, responsive to the heart,
Were bent in worship of thy lips and eyes,
Until, O bliss ! each pleasure-pulsing part
Hath found its fellow in Love's sweet emprise ;
Each answering other in such eager wise
As they would never cease to kiss and cling—
Ah ! then meseemed amid the storm of sighs
I heard thy voice exclaiming, “O my King !
So may my soul be ever true to thine,
As with thy body thou dost worship mine !”

THE OVERFLOWING CUP.

INTO the crystal chalice of the soul
Is falling, drop by drop, Life's blending mead.
The pleasant waters of our childhood speed
And enter first; and Love pours in its whole
Deep flood of tenderness and gall. There roll
The drops of sweet and bitter that proceed
From wedded trustfulness, and hearts that bleed
For children that outrun us to the goal.
And later come the calmer joys of age—
The restful streams of quietude that flow
Around their fading lives, whose heritage
Is whitened locks and voice serene and low.
These added blessings round the vessel up—
Death is the overflowing of the cup.

ANTIQUITY.

HE spoke to us of Egypt in her prime ;
He showed us pictures of the rock-hewn kings
And Memnon's hoary bulk, that no more sings
His greeting to the morning sun. The time
Slipped back through thirty centuries, dim with rime
And mist that veils the dawn of human things,
Until we felt the awe the great past brings
To us who dwell in this unstoried clime.

And then he paused and turned ; the night was torn
With flying clouds, but once, there gleamed a
star,—

A single sun of all the heavenly band ;
And he, " Lo ! that dim light saw Egypt born ;
Before it, all earth's ages moments are,
And all her greatness, but a grain of sand."

MIDNIGHT.

THE world is locked in sleep with perfect night.
Gazing from out my window I behold
The moon, a burnished bowl of gleaming gold,
Hung in mid-sky with azure wine brimmed bright.
The sentinel church-spire lifts its stately height,
And, where the vane upon its crest is bold,
A single wanderer from the starry fold
Shines cold and spectral with its twinkling light.

White are the roofs, in crystal garments all ;
Unheard the murmuring streamlet's rhythmic
flow—
Weird shapes upon the spotless waste of snow,
The tree trunks stand where their gaunt shadows fall.
Blest hour of rest—gift of a hand Divine !
What quiet, peace, tranquillity are thine !

POMONA.

AT noon of night the goddess, silver-stoled,
Came with light foot across the moonlit land,
And breezes soft as blow o'er Samarcand
Stirred her free hair that glinted like clear gold ;
Sweet were her smiling lips, as when of old
Vertumnus wooed her on the grassy strand
Of some swift Tuscan river overspanned
By sunny skies that knew no breath of cold.

So when the door of dawn grew aureate,
And broken was the dim night's peaceful hush
By harvesters uprisen to greet the morn,
They knew Pomona had passed by in state,
For on the apples was a rosier blush,
And on the grapes a richer lustre born.

WHEAT.

BEHOLD a billowy sea of golden spears
That to and fro in every breeze that blows
Tosses its amber waves and proudly shows
Bright scarlet poppies when the warm wind veers.
Hearken, and lo ! there falls upon the ears
A song as mellow as the one that rose
From Boaz's fields at daytime's drowsy close
And thrilled his heart in those dim Hebrew years.

And the swart mower, leaning on his scythe
To catch the swelling music, clear and blythe,
Thinks, as his eyes with love-light brim and glow,
That she who sings, the while the bright beams fade,
Is far diviner than the lovely maid
Who gleaned in fields Judæan long ago.

THE FOUNTAIN.

A TRITON, drowsy as the god of Sleep,
From horn uplifted pours a limpid stream
Athwart whose falling drops the sunbeams gleam
Through waving boughs that span the crystal deep.
From brooding branches bright-eyed nestlings peep,
The merry sylvan choirs are hushed in dream,
And all the voices of the mid-day seem
Within some slumbering warder's wakeless keep.

Into a shadowy, moss-rimmed pool like this,
Musing of dead delight and longed-for bliss,
The while the murmurous water lapped the shore,
Alluring nymphs, with smiles and amorous breath,
Drew the young Hylas down to meet his death
Amid the silvery reeds that noon of yore.

THE STATUE.

As perfect in their symmetry as thine,
 O inarticulate marble lips, were those
 My love once raised to mine, yet tinged with rose
And freighted with a redolence divine.
Her poise of head was queenly ; fair and fine
 Her alabaster arms that shamed the snows ;
 Her gracious bearing had thy pure repose,
And stately was she as the forest pine.

Knowledge sat throned upon her regal brow,
 Round which her tresses rippled, bright as gold ;
Sweet as a songbird's on a budding bough
 The liquid voice that from her lips outrolled ;
But lo ! there came an awful change, and now
 Thou, in thine icy hush, art not more cold !

A BUTTERFLY IN WALL STREET.

WINGED wanderer from clover meadows sweet,
Where all day long beneath a smiling sky
You drained the wild-flowers' cups of honey dry
And heard the drowsy winds their loves repeat,
What idle zephyr whispering deceit
Has won your heart and tempted you to fly
Unto this noisy town and vainly pry
Into the secrets of this busy street?

To me your unexpected presence brings
A thought of fragrant pastures, buds and flowers,
And sleepy brooks, and cattle in the fold ;
Or, watching as you soar on trembling wings,
I think for those who toil through weary hours
You are a type of their uncertain gold.

A PACIFIC DAWN.

WHEN pale Selene in her crescent boat
Sails down into the margin of the West
Through shoals of stars that twinkle in unrest,
In fancy's bark I follow her, and float
O'er sapphire seas to dreamy realms remote,
And at my side there goes a feathered guest
Who sings to cheer me, and the air is blest
With melody responsive to his note.

On, on I journey in the starry wake,
And all about me is the purple dark
Whence blow the winds by which my bark is
borne ;
And suddenly the poppy fetters break,
The moon is gone, and in the field a lark
Pays tribute to the faint Pacific morn.

"QUEM METUI MORITURA."

Æneid, iv. 604.

WHAT need have I to fear—so soon to die?

Let me work on, not watch and wait in dread :

What will it matter, when that I am dead,
That they bore hate or love that near me lie?

'Tis but a lifetime, and the end is nigh

At best or worst. Let me lift up my head

And firmly, as with inner courage, tread
Mine own appointed way on mandates high.
Pain could but bring from all its evil store,

The close of pain : hate's venom could but kill ;
Repulse, defeat, desertion, could no more,

Let me have lived my life, not cowered until
The unhindered and unchastened hour was here.
So soon—what is there now for me to fear?

DESPONDENCY.

WHEN thou didst leave me, Hope, why didst thou
not,

In place of thy sweet presence leave Despair,
With her grim visage and distorted hair?
The past, the future, then had been forgot—
The soul, centred on its blasted lot,
Had rested mute and desolate of care—
Had ceased to question where its treasures were,
And roamed no more the melancholy spot.

But now, too much remembering of the past
So huge the weight of gloom around me spread
That I, like one within a charnel cast,
Hear but the dirges ringing for the dead—
Feel all the pangs of life, and thought, and breath,
Yet walk I all the time with hand in hand of Death.

A DESIRE.

LET me not lay the lightest feather's weight
Of duty upon Love. Let not, my own,
The breath of one reluctant kiss be blown
Between our hearts. I would not be the gate
That bars, like some inexorable fate,
The portals of thy life ; that says, " Alone
Through me shall any joy to thee be known ; "
Rather the window, fragrant early and late
With thy sweet, clinging thoughts, that grow and
twine
Around me, like some bright and blooming vine :
Through which the sun shall shed his wealth on thee
In golden showers ; through which thou may'st look
out
Exulting in all beauty, without doubt,
Or fear, or shadow of regret from me.

AN ANTIQUE INTAGLIO.

GREAT cities that defied Time's power are dust,
And mighty temples ruins ; yet this gem,
Seeming a fragile thing, outliveth them.

Its beauty bears no trace of Time's keen thrust,
Undimmed the marvellous lustre that doth trust
To none its secret ; every delicate line
Glow with immortal freshness and divine,
That fears no ravage of decay or rust.

How infinite is art ! A magic glass
This tiny, chiselled disk becomes to me :

Greece and her glories rise and shine and pass
Before my dazzled eyes ; then fade to wan

And spectral shores, where the Ægean Sea
Guards the lone ruins of the Parthenon.

TO BAYARD TAYLOR.

BAYARD, awaken not this music strong,
 While round thy home the indolent sweet breeze
 Floats lightly as the summer breath of seas
 O'er which Ulysses heard the Siren's song.
 Dreams of low-lying isles to June belong,
 And Circe holds us in her haunts of ease ;
 But later, when these high ancestral trees
 Are sere, and such melodious languors wrong
 The reddening strength of the autumnal year,
 Yield to heroic words thy ear and eye ;—
 Intent on these broad pages thou shalt hear
 The trumpets' blare, the Argive battle-cry,
 And see Achilles hurl his hurtling spear,
 And mark the Trojan arrows make reply !

A MOTHER'S PICTURE.

SHE seemed an angel to our infant eyes !

Once, when the glorifying moon revealed

Her who at evening by our pillow kneeled,—
Soft-voiced and golden-haired, from holy skies
Flown to her loves on wings of Paradise,—

We looked to see the pinions half concealed

The Tuscan vines and olives will not yield

Her back to me, who loved her in this wise,
And since have little known her, but have grown

To see another mother, tenderly

Watch over sleeping children of my own.

Perchance the years have changed her : yet alone

This picture lingers ; still she seems to me

The fair young angel of my infancy.

HOPE DEFERRED.

BRING no more flowers and books and precious
things !

O speak no more of our beloved Art,
Of summer haunts,—melodious wanderings

In leafy refuge from this weary mart !

Surely such thoughts were dear unto my heart ;
Now every word a newer sadness brings !

Thus oft some forest-bird caged far apart
From verdurous freedom, droops his careless wings,
Nor craves for more than food from day to day ;

So long bereft of wild-wood joy and song,
Hopeless of all he dared to hope so long,
The music born within him dies away ;

Even the song he loved becomes a pain,
Full-freighted with a yearning all in vain.

“FROM OUT ETERNAL SILENCE DO
WE COME.”

FROM out eternal silence do we come,
Into eternal silence do we go ;
For was there not a time, and swift or slow
Must come again, when all this world's loud hum
Was naught to us, and shall again grow dumb
Through all eternity?—Between two low,
Dark, stony portals, with much empty show
Of tinkling brass and sounding fife and drum,
The endless Caravan of Life moves on ;
Or whence or whither, to what destiny,
But He who dwells beyond the farthest dawn
Knows, yet reveals not, evermore even He
In silence wrapt, for all the thunders roll,
Save for His deathless message to our soul !

TO A FRIEND.

(With Shakespeare's Sonnets.)

WHAT can I give him, who so much hath given,
That princely heart, so over-kind to me,
Who, richly guerdoned both of earth and heaven,
Holds for his friends his heritage in fee?
No costly trinket of the golden ore,
Nor precious jewel of the distant Ind.
Ay me! These are not hoarded in my store,
Who have no coffers but my grateful mind.
What gift then—nothing? Stay, this Book of Song
May show my poverty and thy desert,
Steeped, as it is, in love, and love's sweet wrong,
Red with the blood that ran through Shakespeare's
heart.
Read it once more, and, fancy soaring free,
Think, if thou canst, that I am singing Thee.

COLONEL FREDERICK TAYLOR.

(Gettysburg, July 3rd, 1863.)

MANY the ways that lead to death, but few
Grandly, and only one is glory's gate,
Standing wherever freemen dare their fate,
Determined, as thou wert, to die—or do.
This hast thou passed, young soldier, storming through
The fiery darkness round it, not too late
To know the invaders beaten from thy State,
Ah, why too soon to rout them and pursue?
But some must fall as thou hast fallen ; some
Remain to fight and fall another day ;
And some go down in peace to their long rest.
If 'twere not now, it would be still to come,
And whether now, or when thy hairs were gray,
Were fittest for thee, God alone knows best.

AFTER LONG DAYS OF DULL PERPETUAL
RAIN.

AFTER long days of dull perpetual rain,
And from gray skies, the sun at last shines bright,
And all the sparkling trees are glad with light,
And all the happy world laughs out again ;
The sorrow is forgotten, past the pain ;
For Nature has no memory, feels the blight
Of no regret, nor mars the day's delight
With idle fears and hopes and longings vain.

Ah me ! it is not so with us ; the ghost
Of vanished joys pursues us everywhere ;
We live as much in all that we have lost
As what we own ; no present is so fair
That the best moment's sunlight is not crossed
By shadowy shapes of hope, and fear, and care.

HUMAN LIFE.

WE are pursued by Fate ; nothing on earth
Flowers into satisfaction ; on the skirt
Of all temptation, hidden yet alert,
Hangs disappointment ready to spring forth
And jar with discord the clear song of mirth ;
Even our best pleasure has the sting of hurt,
And prayers and tears are futile to avert
The Nemesis that haunts us from our birth.

Oh ! what avail our struggles, who are caught
In Fate's inextricable web ! In vain
Through the dark future our exhausted thought
Seeks for a resting-place secure from pain ;
Our Present crumbles 'neath us while we laugh,
Our Past has but a sigh for epitaph.

LITTLE WE KNOW WHAT SECRET
INFLUENCE.

LITTLE we know what secret influence

A word, a glance, a casual tone may bring,
That, like the wind's breath on a chorded string,
May thrill the memory, touch the inner sense,
And waken dreams that come we know not whence ;
Or like the light touch of a bird's swift wing,
The lake's still face a moment visiting,
Leave pulsing rings, when he has vanished thence.
You looked into my eyes an instant's space,
And all the boundaries of time and place
Broke down, and far into a world beyond
Of buried hopes and dreams my soul had sight,
Where dim desires long lost, and memories fond
Rose in a soft mirage of tender light.

THE REJECTED JAPANESE LOVER.*

WHERE golden-red the lush persimmon grows,
Where dusk-green sway the pine-boughs dreamfully,
I choose, my love, I choose at night for thee,
With fervent vows, a fragrant-petalled rose—
White as camellias of the isle, whence blows
A spice-wind o'er the blissful, deep-blue sea,
And where the long-necked storks feed, tempest-free,
On sweet palm-buds or ebon-glossy sloes !
I place it 'neath thy porch within a vase,
To tell, love, how my heart for thee beats true,
And of thy heart to beg a tender grace,
When, wistfully, at dawn I pass thy door.
Yet what see I, there, dying in the dew ?
My rose, outcast, that whispers—" Hope no more ! "

* In Japan it is etiquette for a lover to select some choice plant and place it, at night, in a vase or flower-pot that hangs suspended by three slender chains from the verandah of such dwellings as contain one or more marriageable damsels. Should his suit be favoured, the floral gift is watered and carefully tended ; but if, on the contrary, his advances are coldly received by the maiden, or if her kinsfolk object to the alliance, the plant is found withered and forsaken in the garden-walk the following morning.—W. S.

THE POET'S HOUSE.

WHERE should the Poet's house and household be ?
Beneath what skies, in what untroubled air
Sings he for very joy of songs so fair
That in their steadfast laws he most is free ?
In woods remote, where darkly tree on tree
Let fall their curtained shadows, to ensnare
His dreams, or hid in Fancy's happiest lair,—
Some laughing island of the stormless sea ?
Ah, never such to him their welcome gave !
But, flattered by the gods in finer scorn,
He drifts upon the world's unresting wave,
As drifts a sea-flower, by the tempest torn
From sheltered porches of the coral cave
Where it expands, of calm and silence born.

IN ABSENCE.

ABSENCE from thee is something worse than death ;
For, to the heart that slumbers in the shroud,
What are the mourners' tears and clamours loud,
The open grave, the dismal cypress wreath ?
The quiet body misses not its breath ;
The pain that shivers through the weeping crowd
Is idle homage to the visage proud
That changeth not for all Affliction saith.
But to be thus from thee so far away,
Is as though I, in seeming death, might be
Conscious of all that passed about my clay ;
As though I saw my doleful obsequy,
Mourned my own loss, rebelled against decay,
And felt thy tear-drops trickling over me.

FROM THE NORTH.

ONCE more without you ! Sighing, dear, once more,
For all the sweet, accustomed ministries
Of wife and mother ; not as when the seas
That parted us my tender message bore
From the gray olives of the Cretan shore
To those that hide the broken Phidian frieze
Of our Athenian home,—but far degrees,
Wide plains, great forests, part us now. My door
Looks on the rushing Neva, cold and clear :
The swelling domes in hovering splendour lie
Like golden bubbles, eager to be gone ;
But the chill crystal of the atmosphere
Withholds them, and along the northern sky
The amber midnight smiles in dreams of dawn.

A BROKEN LILY.

O LILY, dropped upon the gray sea-sand,
What time my fair love through the morning land
Led the rejoicing children, singing all
In happy chorus, to their festival,
Under green trees the flowery fields among ;
 Now, when the noon-sun blazes o'er the sea,
And echo tells not of the song they sung,
 And all thy silver splendour silently
Thou yieldest to the salt and bitter tide,
 I find thee, and, remembering on whose breast
Thy day began in thy fresh beauty's pride,
 Though of thy bloom and fragrance dispossessed,
Thou art to me than all June's flowers more sweet,
Fairer than Aphrodite's foam-kissed feet !

BEETHOVEN.

O STATELIEST ! who shall speak thy praise, who find
A fitting word to utter before thee ?
Thou lonely splendour, thou consummate mind,
Who marshallest thy hosts in majesty ;
Thy shadowy armies of resistless thought,
Thy subtle forces drawn from Nature's heart,
Thy solemn breathing, mighty music, wrought
Of life and death—a miracle thou art !
The restless tides of human life that swing
In stormy currents, thou dost touch and sway ;
Deep tones within us answer, shuddering,
At thy resounding voice—we cast away
All our unworthiness, made strong by thee,
Thou great uplifter of humanity !

INFINITO.

COULD I but grasp the vision, make it mine—
In one full masterly embrace possess
The splendour of my dream, its joy enshrine,
And hold it as some trophy-crown, to bless
With perfect calm and peace the conquest won ;
Or could I clear the mist and fairly face
The high beatitudes of radiant morn,
That reach through infinite degrees of space ;
What then—ah, what ? The heart would sigh for
more ;
The longings of a great unrest would send
Swift-wingèd messengers far on before ;
Such glory undefined could only lend
A depth to height, a sadness to desire,—
A voice for ever calling, “ Come up higher.”

AT SUNSET.

Songs without words.

SOFT, like a stolen calm, their echoes rest,
Above the worn and grievous burdened soul :
The harsh world loses now its dull control ;
O, rapt Imagination, thou art blest !
Out of the molten glory of the west,
From the low sunset bells that faintly toll,
Commingling, as in one dear, ransomed whole,
Comes now the music that I love the best—
Music without the noisy organ-peal,
Without the chorus or the dulcet string,
Unwritten, silent to the sensuous ear,
Strains all unheard, but which the heart can feel,
Vague voices of the memory murmuring
The tears and laughters of some halcyon year.

GREETING.

I GIVE thee greeting—thou, my wedded heart ;
Through the fair seasons of so many a year
Thou hast bestowed thy benediction dear
On a more shadowed life than thine ; thou art
A sunny clime, a light that dost impart
Thy radiance with more than blithesome cheer ;
A golden lining, when dark clouds appear,—
To shed thy rays unconscious of the art.
Though all else fail, thy constancy will last ;
The bond that holds us thrall I may not plead,
'Tis tried and true, and needs no verse or rhyme ;
I gaze into thy face, I hold thee fast,
I print love's kiss on thy sweet lips and lead
Thee forth through all the shoals and deeps of
time !

THE FALLEN SHAFT.

Under Eagle Cliff, Lake Mohawk.

ABOUT thy base its giant fragments lie.

What power, what silence ; mighty solitude !

Through age on age, in towering grandeur, stood
The broken, balanced shaft against the sky,
Riven from thy battlement of rock on high :
The glaciers once crushed through thy wild abode,
The Titan thunders oft thy summit rode.

These it withstood, their ruin to defy ;

But, ah ! thou subtle, sluggish dreamer, Time,—

Stealthy of hand, mute-voiced, unpassioned, thou,—
With patience, through a thousand years, didst
steal

Its flinty feet, with aid of rust and clime,

Didst bend its massive form and hoary brow,

And force, at last, the awful wreck to reel.

GREAT TEMPLE OF KARNAK.

THOU art not now ; a far-off age did knell
A greater death, that marked thy lesser fall,
Thou mighty temple, reared by Egypt's thrall :
What grandeur do thy silent ruins tell,
Wherein a thousand buried arts do dwell !
O Karnak ! wondrous e'en thy mould'ring wall,
Whose countless crumbling monuments recall
The mystic splendour of thine ancient spell !
But wherefore name thy praise ! For evermore,
As ever, thou art dead. Thou ne'er didst live
Save in the mockery of Truth, to score
The spoils of false, despotic kings ; to give
The tyrant's lash to cringing slave, or fame
To glory, or to baser gods a name !

THE RETURN TO NATURE.

OH, Nature, take me home, and henceforth keep !
Laugh out at me with all thy mirthful streams,
To break the tenor of dull-hearted dreams ;
From ambush in a waving thicket leap,
And startle with a song as past I creep ;
Or speed me by invisible wild-teams
That drive through forests and rough mountain-
seams,
And furrow dark the forehead of the deep.
Nay, do thou more for me, great griefless friend !
Hurt to the core, without the gift to weep,
Back from man's world to thine I groping tend ;
Now let thy clods unkindled smoothly sweep
This cooling clod—my heart ; then do thou bend,
Uplift, and in bright calm my spirit steep.

DELAY !

O SPIRIT of the Spring, delay, delay !

Be chary of thy gifts ; by slow degrees
Roll back the leafy tide on forest trees ;
And in all fields keep thou a jealous sway,
Lest the low grass break into sudden spray,
And clover toss its purples on the breeze.

Bind fast those lily-buds, that prying bees
Shall have no entrance, murmur as they may.
Scatter not yet the orchard's scented snows,
Nor break the cage that holds the butterfly,
Nor let the blow-ball wander up the sky :—
What ! flown so lightly ? by yon upstart rose,
Summer is here with all her gaudy shows.

O Spirit of the Spring, good-bye, good-bye !

EPHEMERA.

MIDGES and Moths,—ay, all you restless things,
That dance and tourney in the fields of air :
You, Psyche's postman, trim and debonair,
With eye-like freckles on your bronzed wings ;
You, candle-elves, whose strange emblazonings
With sign of death our ancient gossips scare,
Or who, when sleeps the humming-bird, repair
With stealthy beaks to drain the honey springs,—
Your secret's out ! I know you for the souls
Of all light loves that ever caused heart-ache,
Still dancing suit as some new beauty toles !
Nor can you e'er your flitting ways forsake,
Till the just winds strip off your painted stoles,
And sere leaves follow in your downward wake.

THE FOUNTAINS OF THE RAIN.

THE merchant clouds that cruise the sultry sky,
As soon as they have spent their freight of rain,
Plot how the cooling thrift they may regain :
All night along the river-marsh they lie,
And at their ghostly looms swift shuttles ply,
To weave them nets wherewith the streams to drain ;
And often in the sea they cast a seine,
And draw it, dripping, past some headland high.
Many a slender naiad, with a sigh,
Is in their arms uptaken from her plain ;
The trembling myrmidons of dew remain
No longer than the flash of morning's eye,
Then back unto their misty fountains fly :
This is the source and journey of the rain.

HOMESICK.

THIS were a miracle, if it could be !
If, never loitering since the prime of day,
Since kissing the cool lips of Northern May,
This drowsy wind, at evening, brought to me
The fragrant spirit of the apple-tree ;
Or, if so far sweet sounds could make their way,
That I should hear the robin's twilight lay
Float o'er a thousand leagues of foamy sea !
Now, save I know those eyes exchange no beams
With yonder star (so curves the earth between),
I'd say : My friend doth from his casement lean,
And charge Canopus, by his pilot-gleams,
To bear love to my port, and lovely dreams
Of homeward slopes new-clothed with summer
green.

THE OREAD.

SHE dwells upon the fountained heights serene,
I by the broadening river's sullied flow ;
She could not breathe the air we breathe below,
Nor we the air that wraps her pure demesne.
Light loves her ; there the morning first is seen,
There long delays the wistful afterglow ;
Above her gleams the fountain-feeding snow,
Beneath are forests all the twelvemonth green.
She dwells afar ; yet still the river sings
What she has sung above its cradle bright ;
I look, and lo ! the swarthy current brings
An alpine bloom slipped through her fingers white ;
But not until the rivers seek their springs
May any gift of mine achieve her height.

EQUINOX.

"The night of time far surpasseth the day ; and who knows when was the equinox ?"

FIRST, winds of March must blow and rains must beat,
Thick airs blend wood, and field, and distant hill,
Before the heavy sky has wept its fill ;
And, like a creeping sloth, the chill must eat
Down close to Nature's core ; in dull repeat
The days move on with scant light until,
Far shining from his western window-sill,
Some evening sun full face to face we meet !
And then we say the line is crossed : the feud
Between Old Night and Day adjusted stands,
As in a balance swung by airy hands
Above the clouds. Our fancies are but crude,
And lightly gossip of infinitude :
None knows how wide the arch of Night expands !

GARDEN STATUES.

EROS.

A NAKED baby Love among the roses,
Watching with laughing gray-green eyes for me,
Who says that thou art blind? Who hides from thee?
Who is it in his foolishness supposes
That ever a bandage round thy sweet face closes
Thicker than gauze? I know that thou canst see!
Thy glances are more swift and far more sure
To reach their goal than any missile is,
Except that one which never yet did miss,
Whose slightest puncture not even Death can cure,
Whose stroke divides the heart with such a bliss
As even the strongest trembles to endure,—
Thine arrow that makes glad the saddest weather
With the keen rustle of its purple feather!

II.

APHRODITE.

AND thou whose tresses like straw-coloured gold,
Above the scarlet gladiole float and shine,—
Whose comely breasts, whose shoulders fair and fine,
Whose fathomless eyes and limbs of heavenly mould,
Thrill me with pains and pleasures manifold,
Racy of earth, yet full of fire divine,—
Art thou unclean as that old Paphian dream?
I know thou art not; for thou camest to me
Out of the white foam-lilies of the sea,
Out of the salt-clear fountain's clearest stream,
The embodiment of purest purity,
As healthful as the sun's directest beam,
So life-giving that up beneath thy feet,
Wherever thou goest, the grass-flowers bubble sweet!

III.

PSYCHE.

AND thou among the violets lying down,
With gracile limbs curled like a sleeping child's,
And dewy lips, and cheeks drawn back with smiles,
And bright hair wrapped about thee for a gown,
Does some implacable fate with scowl and frown
Weave for thy feet its dark insidious wiles?
Not so, for I have known thee from thy youth
A singer of sweet tunes and sweeter words,
To merry tinkling of soft cithern chords.
Thine is the way of happiness and truth,
And all thy movements are as swift and smooth
As through the air the strongest-flying bird's.
Infinite joy about thy presence clings,
Unspeakable hope falls from thy going wings !

IV.

PERSEPHONE.

AND thou that by the poppy bloom dost stand
Robed in the dusky garments of the south,
With slumber in thine eyes and on thy mouth,
Sandalled with silence, having in thy hand
A philtre for Death and a sleep-bearing wand,
Bringest thou the immitigable fire and drouth ?
No ; for thy shadowy hair is full of balm,
Thy philtre is delight, thy wand gives rest.
See, now I fold my hands upon my breast !
Come, touch me with thy cool and soothing palm,
Lull me to measureless sleep, ineffable calm,
And bear me to thy garden in the west,
Beyond whose ever-clouded confine lies
A sweet, illimitable paradise !

THE WIND.

THE wind, that poet of the elements,
To-night comes whistling down our tropic lanes,
And wakes the slumbrous hours with sweet refrains.
From creamy cups, filled with magnolia scents,
His luscious lips have gained rich recompense
For scaling her green towers. To him complains
The lonesome lily of her discontents,
While orange-blossoms scent the Southern lanes.
The jasmine, with her white soul in her face,
Bestows her holy kisses on his mouth ;
Before the pilgrim-minstrel violets place
The purple censers of their fervent youth ;
And nodding poppies, with a drowsy grace,
Anoint his feet with dream-oils of the South.

IDYLLS.

CREUSA, in those idyll lands delaying,
For ever hung with mellow mists of gold,
We find but phantoms of delights long cold.
We listen to the pine and ilex swaying
Only in echo ; to the players playing,
On faint, sweet flutes, lost melodies of old.
The beauteous heroes are but stories told ;
Vain at the antique altars all our praying.
Oh, might we join, in vales unknown to story,
On shores unsung, by Western seas sublime,
The spirit of that loveliness and glory
Hellenic, with these hearts of fuller time,
Then to our days would summer joys belong
That thrill us now in old idyllic song.

ENOCH.

I LOOKED to find a man who walked with God,
Like the translated patriarch of old ;—
Though gladdened millions on his footstool trod,
Yet none with him did such sweet converse hold.
I heard the wind in low complaint go by,
That none its melodies like him could hear ;
Day unto day spoke wisdom from on high,
Yet none like David turned a willing ear.
God walked alone unhonoured through the earth ;
For Him no heart-built temple open stood ;
The soul forgetful of her nobler birth,
Had hewn Him lofty shrines of stone and wood,
And left unfinished and in ruins still
The only temple He delights to fill.

THE TREES OF LIFE.

FOR those who worship Thee there is no death,
For all they do is but with Thee to dwell.
Now, while I take from Thee this passing breath,
It is but of Thy glorious name to tell.
Nor words nor measured sounds have I to find,
But in them both my soul doth ever flow ;
They come as viewless as the unseen wind,
And tell thy noiseless steps where'er I go.
The trees that grow along Thy living stream,
And from its springs refreshment ever drink,
For ever glittering in Thy morning beam,
They bend them o'er the river's grassy brink ;
And as more high and wide their branches grow,
They look more fair within the depths below.

.

LOVE AGAINST LOVE.

As unto blowing roses summer dew,
Or morning's amber to the tree-top choirs,
So to my bosom are the beams that use
To rain on me from eyes that love inspires.
Your love, vouchsafe it, royal-hearted few,
And I will set no common price thereon ;
Oh ! I will keep as heaven its holy blue,
Or night her diamonds, that dear treasure won.
But aught of inward faith must I forego,
Or miss one drop from Truth's baptismal hand,
Think poorer thoughts, pray cheaper prayers, and grow
Less worthy trust, to meet your heart's demand ?
Farewell ! your wish I for your sake deny ;
Rebel to love in truth to love am I.

DEFIANCE.

TIME's wonted ravage shall not touch my love.
His wrath I challenge, his assault defy.
Rust gathered never on the blue above,
Nor blearing film upon day's golden eye ;
Earth and the heavens have gems that are eterne,
The ruby whitens not with bleach of years ;
Ever Orion and his brothers burn,
Nor even despair itself their fading fears.
Oh ! would he say, who did all truth discern,
That you, then, stars of my heart's heaven, may die?
Or can that heart its secret quite unlearn,
Nor be illumined when your light is nigh ?
Though Time o'ercame the skies, their azure staining,
Time's lord were Love, immortal and unwaning.

DROUTH.

WHY do we pity those who weep? The pain
That finds a ready outlet in the flow
Of salt and bitter tears is blessèd woe,
And does not need our sympathies. The rain
But fits the shorn field for new yield of grain ;
While the red brazen skies, the sun's fierce glow,
The dry, hot winds that from the tropics blow
Do parch and wither the unsheltered plain.
The anguish that through long, remorseless years
Looks out upon the world with no relief,
Of sudden tempests or slow dripping tears,—
The still, unuttered, silent, wordless grief
That evermore doth ache, and ache, and ache,—
This is the sorrow wherewith hearts do break.

THE SADDEST HOUR.

THE saddest hour of anguish and of loss
Is not that season of supreme despair
When we can find no least light anywhere
To gild the dread black shadow of the Cross.
Not in that luxury of sorrow when
We sup on salt of tears, and drink the gall
Of memories of days beyond recall—
Of lost delights that cannot come again.

But when with eyes that are no longer wet
We look out on the great, wide world of men,
And, smiling, lean toward a bright to-morrow,
Then backward shrink, with sudden keen regret,
To find that we are learning to forget :
Ah! then we face the saddest hour of sorrow.

COURAGE.

THERE is courage, a majestic thing

That springs forth from the brow of pain, full
grown

Minerva-like, and dares all dangers known,
And all the threatening future yet may bring ;

Crowned with the helmet of great suffering,

Serene with that grand strength by martyrs shown,

When at the stake they die and make no moan,

And even as the flames leap up are heard to sing.

A courage so sublime and unafraid

It wears its sorrow like a coat of mail ;

And fate, the archer, passes by dismayed,

Knowing his best barbed arrows needs must fail

To pierce a soul so armoured and arrayed

That death himself might look on it and quail.

FORGIVENESS.

My heart was heavy, for its trust had been
Abused, its kindness answered with foul wrong.
So, turning gloomily from my fellow-men,
One summer Sabbath-day I strolled among
The green mounds of the village burial-place ;
Where, pondering how all human love and hate
Find one sad level ; and how, soon or late,
Wronged and wrong-doer, each with meekened face,
And cold hands folded over a still heart,
Pass the green threshold of our common grave
Whither all footsteps tend, whence none depart,
Awed for myself, and pitying my race,
Our common sorrow like a mighty wave,
Swept all my pride away, and trembling I forgave !

ADJUSTMENT.

I.

THE tree of Faith, its bare, dry boughs must shed
That nearer Heaven the living one may climb ;
The false must fail, though from our shores of time
The old lament be heard—"Great Pan is dead !"
That wail is Error's from his high place hurled,
This sharp recoil is Evil undertrod,
Our time's unrest, an angel sent of God
Troubling with life the waters of the world.
Even as they list the winds of the Spirit blow
To turn or break our century-rusted vanes ;
Sands shift and waste, the rock alone remains
Where led of Heaven the strong tides come and go,
And storm-clouds rent by thunderbolt and wind
Leave, free of mist, the permanent stars behind.

ADJUSTMENT.

II.

THEREFORE I trust, although to outward sense
Both true and false seem threatened : I will hold
With newer light my reverence for the old,
And calmly wait the births of Providence.
No gain is lost : the clear-eyed saints look down
Untroubled on the wreck of schemes and creeds ;
Love yet remains, its rosary of good deeds
Counting in task-field and o'er peopled town :
Truth has charm'd life ; the Inward Word survives,
And, day by day, its revelation brings ;
Faith, hope, and charity, whatsoever things ;
Which cannot be shaken, stand. Still holy lives
Reveal the Christ of whom the letter told,
And the new Gospel verifies the old.

MY OPEN POLAR SEA.

I.

As those who sail in quest of quiet seas,
Supposed to sleep about the sleeping pole,
Eternal halcyon waves, the term and goal
Of hazard, and of hope, and hope's unease,
Deep bays, bright islands, happy haunts—as these
Whatever chances breasting, armed in soul
To do or suffer, so to know the whole—
Steer toward the Arctic up the steep degrees,
Nor daunted, though a frozen continent
Thwart them with sheer obstruction, coast along,
And seek and find somewhere the straitening rent
That yields them grudgèd entrance, right or wrong ;
And still they strive, on their high aim intent,
And strive the more, the more the perils throng :

MY OPEN POLAR SEA.

II.

So sails my soul for that pacific sea,
The pole and vertex of her different sphere,
Where equatorial sway and swift career
Are charmed and changed to fast tranquillity:
Beyond where storms can beat she there shall be,
Safe locked in blissful calms through all her year;
Unquiet hope no more, unquiet fear,
Can vex her perfect peace and fair degree :
But she must tend her sail, and smite her oar,
And take meanwhile the buffet of the tide ;
Nor, when she hears the rending icebergs roar
Upon her, tremble, but, abashed, abide
To enter that strait gate and dreadful door—
This portal passed, lo, havens free and wide !

SUNRISE.

FLAME HEARTED lover of the Earth—great Sun !

Rise from thy purple couch ; stretch forth thine arms
Through morning's parted curtains ; Let the charms

Of waiting love—which it were death to shun—

Persuade thy clasp. Now hath the Earth begun
To loose her robes of mist ; with mock alarms
She yields her beauty, which love's longing warms,
Forestalling the embrace thy kiss hath won.

Arise, great god of light and life, Arise,

Enfold the fond Earth in the deathless glowing
Of thy fierce love ; Bend from the shimmering skies
Which burn before thee in thine onward going.

No cheer have we and not of thy bestowing :
Thou art the joy of all hope-lifted eyes.

SUNSET.

WITHIN thy burning palace in the West

Thou art awhile withdrawn. Yet doth thy face
Look from the closing portal for a space
Back to the Earth, which thy dear love hath blessed ;
While she with tears and soft sighs half-repressed
Beholds thee sinking in thy resting-place,
As with up-gathered folds of dewy lace
She hugs remembrance to her yearning breast.

Thy glory darkens, and the careful night

Hangs out the moon's pale lamp while yet the flush
On Evening's face—with thy departing light—
Turns from rose-pink to crimson, till the blush
Dies with the coming stars, and slumber's hush
Wraps thy warm bride, who waits thy waking might.

.

*DOUBLE QUATRAINS AND
QUATRAINS.*

THE QUATRAIN.

*Hark at the lips of this pink whorl of shell,
And you shall hear the ocean's surge and roar ;
So in the Quatrain's measure, written well,
A thousand lines shall all be sung in four.*

FRANK DEMPSTER SHERMAN.

RENCONTRE.

TOILING across the Mer de Glace,
I thought of, longed for thee ;
What miles between us stretched, alas !—
What miles of land and sea !

My foe, undreamed of, at my side
Stood suddenly, like Fate.
For those who love, the world is wide,
But not for those who hate.

SPRING.

AGAIN the bloom, the northward flight,
The fount freed at its silver height,
And down the deep woods to the lowest,
The fragrant shadows scarred with light.

O inescapable joy of Spring !
For thee the world shall leap and sing ;
But by her darkened door thou goest
For ever as a spectral thing.

III.

BROKEN PROMISE.

AFTER strange stars, inscrutable, on high ;

After strange seas beneath his floating feet ;

After the glare in many a brooding eye,—

I wonder if the cry of “ Land ” was sweet ?

Or did the Atlantic gold, the Atlantic palm,

The Atlantic bird and flower, seem poor, at best,

To the gray Admiral under sun and calm,

After the passionate doubt and faith of quest ?

IV.

"TO BE DEAD."

IF I should have void darkness in my eyes
While there were violets in the sun to see ;
If I should fail to hear my child's sweet cries,
Or any bird's voice in our threshold tree ;

If I should cease to answer love or wit :
Blind, deaf, or dumb, how bitter each must be !
Blind, deaf, or dumb—I will not think of it !
. . . Vet the night comes when I shall be all three.

VI.

IN DOUBT.

THROUGH dream and dusk a frightened whisper said :

“Lay down the world : the one you love is dead.”

In the near waters, without any cry

I sank, therefore—glad, oh so glad, to die !

Far on the shore, with sun, and dove, and dew,

And apple-flowers, I suddenly saw you.

Then—was it kind or cruel that the sea

Held back my hands, and kissed and clung to me ?

VII.

A LOOK INTO THE GRAVE.

I LOOK, through tears, into the dust to find
What manner of rest man's only rest may be.
The darkness rises up and smites me blind.
The darkness—is there nothing more to see?

Oh, after flood, and fire, and famine, and
The hollow watches we are made to keep
In our forced marches over sea and land—
I wish we had a sweeter place to sleep.

MAPLE LEAVES.

OCTOBER turned my maple's leaves to gold ;
The most are gone now ; here and there one lingers :
Soon these will slip from out the twigs' weak hold,
Like coins between a dying miser's fingers.

PESSIMIST AND OPTIMIST.

THIS one sits shivering in Fortune's smile,
Taking his joy with bated, doubtful breath :
This other, gnawed by hunger, all the while
Laughs in the teeth of Death.

POPULARITY.

SUCH kings of shreds have wooed and won her,
Such crafty knaves her laurel owned,
It has become almost an honour
Not to be crowned.

THE DIFFERENCE.

SOME weep because they part,
And languish broken-hearted,
And others—O my heart !—
Because they never parted.

THE MIRACLE.

THY lips, as if endowed
With potency divine,
Changed with a word my life
From water into wine.

TO A DEAD WOMAN.

NOT a kiss in life ; but one kiss, at life's end,
I have set on the face of Death in trust for thee.
Through long years keep it fresh on thy lips, oh friend !
At the gate of Silence give it back to me.

FATE.

A SUNBEAM kissed a river-ripple,—“Nay,
Naught shall dissever thee and me!”
In night’s wide darkness passed the beam away,
The ripple mingled with the sea.

STRIVE ON, DOOMED SOUL.

STRIVE on, doomed soul, cross the sword with Fate,
Blind Time's award—set no store thereby ;
Th' unclean may creep to the Golden Gate,
The saint plunge, damned, from his place on high.

I'VE SEEN THE SUN ON THE HILL TOP,
THERE.

I'VE seen the sun on the hill top, there,
Shine all as bright in a harlot's hair ;
I've known no midnight black as the morn
An innocent babe to earth was born.

UNISON.

OVER us the wild, cool night

Spread her dark tresses heavy with quick gems,
Till in the twinkling blackness, lithe and light,

We felt like woodflowers swung on hidden stems.

RHYTHM.

THOU canst not wave thy staff in air,
Or dip thy paddle in the lake,
But it curves the bow of beauty there,
And the ripples in rhyme the oar forsake.

BACK FROM THE DARKNESS.

“BACK from the darkness to the light again !”—
Not from the darkness, Love, for hadst thou lain
Within the shadowy portal of the tomb,
Thy light had warmed the darkness into bloom.

QUATRAIN.

SHE would not stir a single jetty lash,
To hear me praised ; but when my life was blamed
Her parian cheeks were kindled like a flash,
And from her heart a sudden love upflamed.

A WOMAN'S PROMISE.

ENOUGH I love you, after years and years,
To write Love in your grave-dust with my tears,
And after you whom shall I love? At most
Only, ah me, a dead man—or a ghost !

A KISS.

LOVE is a plant with double root,
And of strange elastic power :
Men's minds are divided in naming the fruit,
But a kiss is the only flower.

YESTERDAY AND TO-MORROW.

JOYS have three stages, Hoping, Having, and Had :
The hands of Hope are empty, and the heart of Having
is sad ;

For the joy we take, in the taking dies ; and the joy we
Had is its ghost.

Now, which is the better—the joy unknown or the joy
we have clasped and lost ?

YES.

THE words of the lips are double or single,
True or false, as we say or sing :
But the words of the eyes that mix and mingle
Are always saying the same old thing !

A DISAPPOINTMENT.

HER hair was a waving bronze, and her eyes
Deep wells that might cover a brooding soul ;
And who, till he weighed it, could ever surmise
That her heart was a cinder instead of a coal?

THE SNOWDROP.

You ask why Spring's fair first-born flower is white :
Peering from out the warm earth long ago,
It saw above its head great drifts of snow,
And blanched with fright.

SUMMER IN WINTER.

THERE is no blast howe'er so fierce it blows
Across wild moorlands leaguered fast by snows,
That does not bear the presage of a tune
The thrush will carol in the heart of June.

PURSUIT.

THROUGH all our lives we chase a golden prize
That flits like gossamer before us blown ;
Will it avail us at the goal unknown,
When death at last has sealed our searching eyes ?

HER EYES.

HER eyes are like unfathomable lakes
When brightly o'er them morning radiance breaks,
And yet the mariner had best beware,
For many valiant hearts lie shipwrecked there !

MARBLE.

A BLANK unshapely mass but yesterday,
As void of beauty as a clod of clay ;
Behold, a miracle !— for now it seems
A form to haunt the midnight of our dreams.

A RED ROSE.

ONCE, long ago, in some sweet garden's hush,
A lover gave you, snow-white, to his love ;
And, lifted to her lips, you saw her blush,
And blushed to match her damask cheek above.

NOTES.

NOTES.



ADAMS, OSCAR FAY. From *Poet Laureate Idyls*, 1886.

ALDEN, H. M. Mr. Alden is widely known as the Editor of *Harper's Magazine*. His own verse, uncollected I believe, is—so far as I have seen it—of a high quality.

ALDRICH, THOS. BAILEY (1836-). Mr. Aldrich has published several volumes, but the general reader will do best to consult the collective edition of his *Poems* (illustrated edition), published by Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin, & Co., Boston, 1882.

AURINGER, O. C. So far as I am aware, Mr. Auringer has not as yet published in book-form.

BATES, ARLO. From *Sonnets in Shadow*, 1887.

BEERS, HENRY AUGUSTIN (1847-). From *The Thankless Muse*, 1885.

BENSEL, JAMES BERRY. From *In the King's Garden*, 1885.

BENTON, JOEL (1832-). A critic and verse writer of repute.

- BOYESEN, HJALMAR HJORTH (1848-). Prof. Boyesen is a Norwegian by birth, but is now an American citizen. His verse, if I am not mistaken, has not been collected in a volume. As a romancist he is almost as well known on the eastern as on the western side of the Atlantic.
- BRYANT, WILLIAM CULLEN (1794-1878). The best edition of Bryant's Poetical Writings, for British readers, is the author's edition, published in 1873, by Messrs. H. S. King & Co.
- BUNNER, H. C. From *Airs from Arcady*, 1884.
- BURTON, RICHARD E. Contributor to Magazines.
- CHADWICK, JOHN WHITE (1840-). Writer of religious verse.
- CHENEY, JOHN VANCE (1848-). From *Thistle-Drift*, 1887.
- CLARK, K. ELIZABETH. Contributor to Magazines.
- CONE, HELEN GRAY. Contributor to Magazines.
- CRANCH, CHRISTOPHER PEASE (1813-). From *Ariel and Caliban*.
- DORR, JULIA C. R. (1825-). From *Afternoon Songs*, 1885.
- EAMES, ELIZABETH J. From Griswold's *Female Poets of America*.
- FAWCETT, EDGAR (1847-). From *Fantasy and Passion* (1878); *Song and Story* (1884); and *Romance and Reverie* (1886). This charming poet and novelist is one of the most noteworthy sonnet-writers in America. Perhaps the ablest of his romances are *An Ambitious Woman*, *Olivia Delaplaine*, and *The Confessions of Claude*.

FOSTER, WILLIAM PRESCOTT. Contributor to Magazines.

GATES, L. E. From *Verses from the Harvard Advocate*.

GILDER, RICHARD WATSON (1844-). Mr. Gilder, one of the foremost figures in New York literary society, is the author of *The New Day*, *The Celestial Passion*, and *Lyrics*, three volumes of singular charm and promise. The sonnets are from the volume in his collective edition entitled *Lyrics and other Poems*, 1885.

GOODALE, DORA READ (1866-). I have not seen any volume by Miss Goodale: the sonnet I have quoted appeared in *Harper's Magazine*.

GOODRICH, SAMUEL GRISWOLD. Contributor to Magazines.

GOODWIN, HOPESTILL. Contributor to Magazines.

GRAY, BESSIE. Contributor to Magazines.

GUINEY, LOUISE IMOGEN (1861-). From *Songs at the Start*, 1884. Miss Guiney is a young poet of exceptional promise.

HALL, E. CALVERT. Contributor to Magazines.

HAMILTON, HENRY. From *The Poet's Praise*, 1847.

HAYNE, PAUL HAMILTON (1831-1887). From *Poetical Works*. The most prolific and the sweetest singer of the south. If Hayne had written less profusely, and with greater artistic control, his place would have been a high and perhaps permanent one.

HEAVYSEGE, CHARLES. This very unequal but at his best truly noteworthy poet was a Canadian, and distinctly the most original writer in verse whom the Dominion has produced. His sonnets (generally irregular and sometimes consisting merely of seven rhymed couplets) are mainly comprised in the volume called *Jephthah's Daughter*. Heavysege is best known, both in Canada and Great Britain, by his tragedy *Saul*.

HENDERSON, W. J. Contributor to Magazines.

HIGGINSON, THOMAS WENTWORTH (1823-). Mr. Higginson is a voluminous writer both in prose and verse, and has published several volumes. The sonnets I have selected are from *The Afternoon Landscape*, just published by Messrs. Longmans.

HOLMES, OLIVER WENDELL (1809-). From the author's edition of *Poetical Writings*. The work of this veteran poet-essayist is probably as well known in this country as in America.

HOUGHTON, A. B. From *Verses from the Harvard Advocate*.

INNSLEY, OWEN. From *Love Poems and Sonnets*, 1881.

JACKSON, HELEN HUNT (1831-1885). From *Verses*, 1887, and *Sonnets and Lyrics*. Long familiar to magazine-readers as "H. H." (*Vide Preface*.)

JONES, EDITH. Contributor to Magazines.

JONES, MARIA W. Contributor to Magazines.

K. VON K., CAMILLA. An anonymous writer about whom I have been unable to ascertain any information.

KENYON, JAMES B. From *Out of the Shadows*, 1886, and *In Realms of Gold*, 1887. As a sonneteer Mr. Kenyon takes a high place among contemporary American poets.

LAMPMAN, ARCHIBALD. A Canadian poet who has written a good deal for the American magazines. He has recently published *Among the Millet*, a volume full of delicate feeling for nature.

LANIER, SIDNEY (1842-1881). A man of true but often mis-directed genius. His *Poems* (posthumous volume, with a memoir) should be read by all students of contemporary poetry.

LAZARUS, EMMA (1849-1888). From *Poems*. In two vols. (posthumous, with memoir, 1889). Miss Lazarus is the foremost contemporary Jewish poet.

LONGFELLOW, HENRY WADSWORTH (1807-1882). The best one-volume edition for British readers is the *Blackfriars Edition* (Routledge), which is more comprehensive than any other.

LOWELL, JAMES RUSSELL (1819-1888). From *Heartsease and Rue*, one of the most delightful volumes by this delightful writer.

LYNCH-BOTTA, ANNE CHARLOTTE. From Griswold's *Female Poets of America*.

MARKHAM, CHARLES EDWIN. Magazine contributor.

MORSE, JAMES HERBERT. From *Poems*. Mr. Morse has distinct originality, though his poetic vision is sometimes stronger than his faculty of adequate expression.

MOULTON, LOUISE CHANDLER. Although so widely known as a writer of exceptionally fine verse, and particularly of sonnets, Mrs. Moulton has only published one volume of poetry, *Swallow Flights*. A new volume of lyrics and sonnets is to appear this summer (1889).

OSSOLI, MARGARET FULLER (1810-1850). A woman of genius rather than a writer of genius, and a remarkable figure in the literary history of America.

PECK, SAMUEL MINTURN (1854-1886). From *Cap and Bells*.

PERCIVAL, JAMES GATES (1795-1856). A close disciple of Bryant, but inferior to his master in insight and style.

PERRY, LILLAH CABOT. I know nothing of this writer save as the reputed author of *Heart of the Weed* (Houghton, Mifflin, & Co., 1887). I was informed that the anonymous author was a Mrs. Perry, and concluded that it was Norah Perry, but I have been authoritatively assured that the above is the name of the writer of *Heart of the Weed*, whence the sonnets are selected.

PIATT, JOHN JAMES (1835-). The husband, I understand, of the well-known Mrs. S. B. Piatt, from whose writings I regret to have been unable to select any sonnet.

POE, EDGAR ALLAN (1809-1849). An excellent complete edition of Poe's Poetical Writings, with his Prose Poems, Essays, and longest tale, *Arthur Gordon Pym*, is included in the *Chandos Classics*.

PRESTON, MARGARET J. *Colonial Ballads*, etc., 1887.

REESE, LIZETTE WOODWORTH. Contributor to Magazines.

RIVES, AMÉLIE. This brilliant young romancist has shown promise also as a poet. Her verse hitherto has only appeared in magazines. Her "Brother to Dragons" and "The Farrier Lass o' Piping Pebworth" are short stories of exceptional promise, and more artistic than her longer romances—though, I should add, I have not yet read her latest novel, *The Witness of the Sun*.

SARGENT, EPES (1830-1880). Sargent was a minor playwright of repute.

SALTUS, EDGAR E. Mr. Saltus is one of the most noteworthy of the younger school of novelists. His *Mr. Incoul's Misadventure*, *Truth about Tristram Varick*, *Eden*, and *Transactions in Hearts* are full of promise and brilliant talent. In the last named, however, his mannerisms are inartistically obvious, and he takes strange and inexcusable liberties with our language. He has established his position as the foremost literary exponent of pessimism in America, and that he is a worthy disciple of Schopenhauer is proved by his two striking works, *The Anatomy of Negation* and *The Philosophy of Disenchantment*. A third series of studies in contemporary pessimism is announced as forthcoming under the title *Cimmeria*.

SAXE, JOHN GODFREY (1816-1887). From *Poetical Works*, 1882. On a small scale, a kind of American Christopher North. Despite his own conviction that he had "written one of the finest sonnets in the language," he was no sonneteer. His most enduring poem will probably prove to be the *Praed-like* lyric, "Wouldn't you like to know?"

SAXTON, ANDREW B. Contributor to Magazines.

SAUNDERSON, JAMES. Contributor to Magazines.

SCOLLARD, CLINTON (1860-). From *Pictures in Song*, 1884; *With Reed and Lyre*, 1886; and *Old and New World Lyrics*, 1888.

SHERMAN, FRANK DEMPSTER (1860-). From *Madrigals and Catches*, 1887.

SILL, EDWARD ROWLAND (1841-1889). From *Poems*.

SMITH, ELIZABETH OAKES (1806-). Mrs. Oakes Smith won considerable repute in her day.

SPALDING, SUSAN M. Contributor to Magazines.

STEDMAN, EDMUND CLARENCE (1833-). From Author's Collective Edition (Houghton, Mifflin, & Co.). A poet deservedly popular for his stirring ballads and free and graceful lyrics. As the author of the *Poets of America*, and the still more widely known *Victorian Poets*, Mr. Stedman holds an undisputed place as the foremost American literary critic.

STERNE, STUART. From *Beyond the Shadows*, 1888.

STODDARD, RICHARD HENRY (1825-). From *Poetical Works*, 1880. No lover of poetry should overlook this delightful collection.

STORY, WILLIAM WETMORE (1819-). One of the most eminent of American sculptors. Has been described as more of an Anglo-Italian than an American; and is the author of *Roba di Roma* and other popular books, besides his *Poems* (Collective Edition in two vols., 1885; published in this country by Messrs. Blackwood & Son).

STRUTHERS, WILLIAM. Contributor to Magazines.

TAYLOR, BAYARD (1825-1878). From *Poetical Works* (Complete Edition). Bayard Taylor was not a sonneteer, though a deservedly eminent poet.

THAXTER, CELIA (1835-). From *Poems*, 1887.

THAYER, STEPHEN HENRY (1839-). From *Songs of Sleepy Hollow*.

THOMAS, EDITH M. (1854-). From *A New Year's Masque*, 1885. Miss Thomas is one of the most charming of the younger nature-poets; and with her should be mentioned Maurice Thompson, A. Lampman, Bliss Carman, and W. Wilfrid Campbell.

THOMPSON, MAURICE (1844-). From *Songs of Fair Weather*, 1883. (See previous Note.)

TOWNSEND, MARY ASHLEY. From *Down the Bayou*, 1882.

TYRRELL, HENRY. Contributor to Magazines.

VERY, JONES (1813-1880). A poet of a deep religious intensity; once well known, but now seldom read.

WASSON, DAVID ATWOOD (1823-). From *Poems*, 1883.

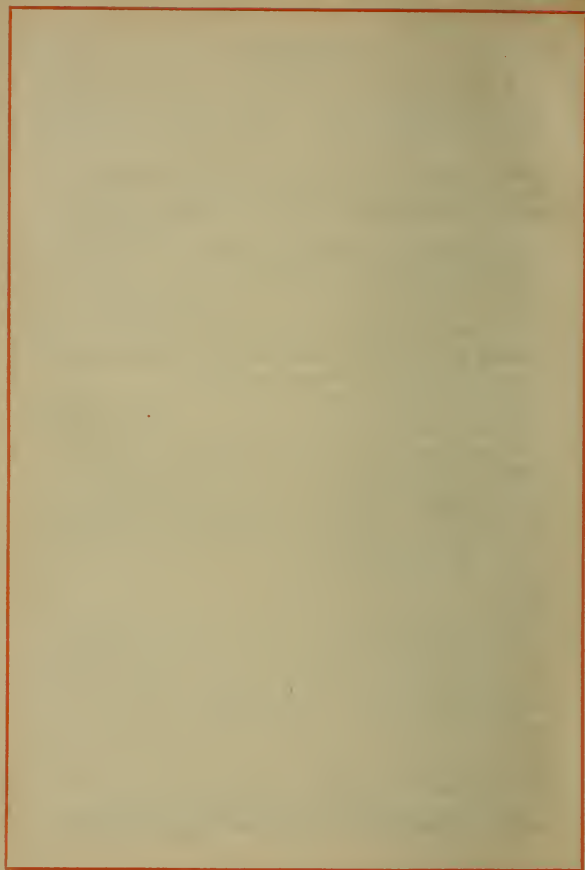
WHEELER-WILCOX, ELLA. From *Poems of Passion*, 1887. An often graceful and pleasing writer, but most uncritically over-estimated by too generous admirers.

WHITTIER, JOHN GREENLEAF (1807-). From *Poetical Writings* (Author's Edition).

WILKINSON, WILLIAM CLEAVER. Contributor to Magazines.

WILSON, ROBERT BURNS (1850-). A poet who delights to depict the life and interpret the sentiment of his fellow Kentuckians. Mr. Wilson is a descendant of the Scottish poet after whom he is named.

ROBERTS, CHARLES G. D. Professor of English Literature at King's College, Windsor, Nova Scotia. Author of *Orion, and other Poems. In Divers Tones*, etc. Editor of *Poems of Wild Life*. The foremost living Canadian poet. The Sonnets given are from *In Divers Tones*.





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